

LOWELL  
FRANK  
MCDONALD:

AN INTERVIEW

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LOWELL FRANK McDONALD: AN INTERVIEW  
NANCY McDONALD DAVISON & ERNEST C  
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This is a transcription of the oral history of Lowell Frank McDonald, born August 29, 1903, on Burnett Street in Sebastopol, California. His parents were Frank McDonald and Leona Maude Hench (McDonald). Interviews were done by his children, Nancy McDonald Davison and Ernest Clarence McDonald. At the time of the interviews he had ten grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren. He says he's right handed, wears glasses for farsightedness, is 5'7'' tall, weighs about 150 pounds and has gray hair, and that his mother named him for the poet, James Russell Lowell, but that he has never read any of Lowell's poetry. He considers himself part of the middle class, and he worked off and on in the printing business for sixty two years while maintaining an apple orchard and small ranch (5+ acres) north of Sebastopol.

#### CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

**What were your grandparent's names?**

My father's side, he was David McDonald, and she was Matilda Thomas and on my mother's side it was Mary Margaret Kepner and Charles Hench.

**What did you call your grandparents?**

Well my grandfathers died when I was just a baby, and the rest of them was Grandma....I never knew a grandpa

**Both of them?**

Yeah, David died when I was about three, and my mother's father died before I even knew him.

**Were your parents and grandparents born in the United States? How did they come here to Sebastopol?**

They were all born in the United States. McDonald's, they come to Sebastopol in about 1903.

**How did they get here, where did they come from?**

Well if they come from the east they had to come by train

**What place did they come from?**

I don't know exact towns, but the state was Iowa - my mother was born in Merengo.

**Were there people here whom they knew?**

I think there was some here that they knew, the Walkers and, you know, stuff like that. They settled over around Dixon, in the valley. The Walkers, see, they had a big wheat farm, and they, of course, naturally come to where the people they knew...

**Do you think the community welcomed them?**

Oh, yes.

**Did you have siblings?**

I had two sisters, one is Joy, one is Nell, and I had one younger brother, and he was Charles.

**How old were you when they were born?**

Well, I wasn't born.

**How old were you when Charles was born?**

Eight.

**And how much older were your sisters?**

They were older, see. Joy was four and Nell was two years older than me.

**What about your aunts and uncles?**

What about em?

**Did you have any, what were their names?**

I had none on my mother's side. She was an only child, she'd had an infant brother, but he died, and then on the McDonald's, there was Uncle



Will, Aunt Ruth and Aunt Lizzie, that was the only three aunts and uncles.

**Did they play an important in your growing up?**  
Oh yes, we were a close family. We always went to somebody's for Thanksgiving, and this and that, you know.

**So they got together a lot.**  
Well, not a lot, but then for those days, yes, because see, most of your traveling was done by horse and buggy. Then later, my father bought a automobile and then we would go to see them fairly often

**How far away did they live?**  
Well, Lizzie lived at Windsor, and then Ruth - Uncle Will, he was gone, I never knew him until my father died, he was gone down the valley all the time, and then Ruth and her husband, they were always around, within twenty miles. He was a ranch worker and he changed jobs on different properties, he might be ten miles this time and fifteen-twenty miles the next. In around the close neighborhood.

**Was there anyone your family was particularly proud of?**  
No, I never heard any of 'em braggin' on anybody.

**Was your family religious? Did you go to church?**  
When I was young. My mother's father, they was great church members, and I was until eight or nine. That was the Sebastopol Methodist church.

**What did your father do for a living?**  
Mostly printing.

**Mostly - was there something else?**  
Well he owned a ranch, but he didn't stop to harvest the crop.

**What kind of crops and who did the harvesting?**  
Gravenstein apples and I did the harvesting. We sold the apples.

**Did your mother work for a living?**  
Not out in a job. [later, however, he mentioned that his mother worked several eight hour days a week at the print shop]

**What about your grandparents, what did they do?**  
They - see my Grandfather McDonald died when I was about four or five. I never knew him. I just remember him once. And then his wife and two daughters, they worked in the fruit, whatever job you can get, but not steady. Grandpa died of diabetes just after the earthquake.[1906]

**Did you play with your cousins when you were growing up?**  
Oh, yes, oh yes.

**How many cousins do you remember?**  
Two step-cousins, Ken and Elva Brooks, they lived at Windsor, and then that was the only cousins I had to play with.[Lizzie's step-children - her married name was Brooks]

**So Ruth and Will didn't...**  
They were later

**If your family took vacations, where did you go and what did you do?**  
Oh, yes, we went on vacations, but there was no set place, we'd just start out and travel for about a hundred miles, stop, camp, fish, there was no set place.

**How did you travel?**  
By car. Early automobile.

**What kind of automobile did you have first?**  
We had an old Studebaker and we had two or three different kinds, they were old cars - never had any Fords, but one I can recall the most was an early Studebaker.



How many miles a day could you travel in those old cars?

A couple hundred miles was a big day

Did you go to the oceans, to the mountains?

The mountains, inland. We never went over to the coast. We just traveled up there once in a while, but that was it.

Do you remember any vacation in particular that you enjoyed?

Well, there was no particular, they all was good, from year to year, there was no particular one. We would say, well now this year we'll go out this way and next year we'll go that way. They were all about the same.

There was a hunting ranch you used to go to.

Yes, it was along in the - I forget what year - my Dad bought a hundred and twenty acre homestead up at Humboldt County, and it had a cabin on it, so we used to go up there, after we got that, most of the time. We'd camp along before we got there, but that was our main headquarters.

What did you like to do on vacation?

Hunting. Hunting and fishing. I was just a kid.

Do you remember any special times with your grandmothers? Did they ever tell you any stories?

No. Course they always had cookies or something like that. They wasn't much on telling stories. They lived on our home place. 5 acres, there was a house there, and they lived there, because the girls [Ruth and Lizzie] worked seasonal work, picking cherries or prunes, or in the dryer, something like that. Didn't cost much to live in those days.

Did you raise pretty much all your own food?

We always had a big garden, we dried a lot of corn, Mama always canned all kinds of vegetables. We tried to live out of the garden as much as we could. Raised popcorn. My father was always very fond of popcorn, and we always had about a half a sack of that every year and he just loved popcorn. I guess that's where I get it, too.

What was your parent's relationship like?

Fine. Well, they were never much emotionally, but I never heard 'em argue or fight, never did, no, they just got along fine.

They were fair to you?

Oh, yes.

How often did you visit your grandmother?

Well, that's according to where she lived. Now first, when she came over from the valley, she had rented a little house down at the Lunsford's place, on the western edge of Sebastopol - mile and a half from home. [On Swartz, near Virginia Street] I'd stop on the way home from school and say hello to her, and then afterwards she moved out to our place, what used to be the brooder house. She lived in that. 'Course it was a big room but she had it divided so it was - like this place here - walls, and she was always drying apples, one of her specialties was dried apple pie.

Would a special memory of her be her dried apple pie?

Yes, I think so, yes.

Did your family ever have a reunion?

Not that I know of, never heard of one. Oh, we had family picnics at Armstrong Grove almost every year.

After you left home did you still get together for special days, special occasions?

After I was married, oh yes, we always went home for Christmas, and Thanksgiving. Ruth, Aunt Ruth, that was her job, the Thanksgiving, when



she was around. And then, Lizzie would come down on Christmas. That was about fifteen miles, and they'd start around daylight and drive down with the horse and buggy, then they would start about three o'clock in the afternoon going home. We always had a big Christmas dinner.

**Did you look forward to Christmas when you were a youngster?**

Oh yes, Christmas was the big time. Christmas and Thanksgiving were the two big times of the year. The tree was in the front room, where the big bay window was. That room wasn't used everyday. That's where they put the big Christmas tree, under the window. That was the year Uncle Will spent all winter here, and we had a hundred and some presents on the tree.

**What kind of presents did you usually get?**

Ordinary, not expensive. I got a chest full of little kid's toys, hammers and stuff like that. I still had the chest for years and years. I don't know whatever happened to it.

**Did you ever have any wishes?**

No, whatever I got.

**What did you have for Christmas dinner?**

Turkey, regular stuff. Lizzie used to furnish the turkey, 'course they raised turkeys. She was pretty stingy. She cooked up this turkey and brought it down, and there was Ruth and the whole family, and they got ready to leave and Papa said, "Well, how much do I owe you for the Turkey?" And I forget how much she charged him.

So, when I was a little kid, seven, eight nine, we went to church, we went to the Christmas play - I was in the play one year and I sang *Away In a Manger*, I was six or seven. I was a big hit and everybody, oh they all just called me back and I had to sing it again, you know, standing up in front of the pulpit, in the old Methodist church, standing up on a box so people could see me. Anyway, that's what it was when I was a little kid, and then, a little later on, I don't know just what happened. Stillings came to town, they ran a grocery store, and they went to the Methodist church. Something happened - I don't know what it was and I never asked particularly - and they had a big church row, and made Papa so disgusted he quit, just quit going, and it was the Stillings were mixed up in it and anyway, somebody did something in the church and they didn't like it and they kicked them out and Stilling himself said that they could come back in if they would get up before the congregation and apologize or whatever happened.

**Was he the preacher?**

Oh no, he liked to be, you know, maybe on some committee or something. That just got to Papa, he said the heck with 'em. I forgot the rest.

**What was special about Thanksgiving?**

We just liked it, that's all. Anticipation of its coming. We always had a big family picnic, or dinner, everybody came, Christmas and Thanksgiving were the two big days of the year.

**What did you do?.**

Eat, and the kids always went out and played.

**So you had your cousins, your aunts and uncles, that came for Thanksgiving...**

Didn't have too many - cousins. Only ones I remember was Ken and Elva. Uncle Will (McDonald) and Aunt Annie and Alvin, (a year older than me) stayed with Grandma Mac one winter. They lived up at Sterling. He was a barber, and the winters got, I guess, pretty cold up there, and they



came and stayed with Grandma and Lizzie and Ruth one winter.

(This was around 1910, because we moved out to the place around 1909. We lived on Burnett Street until Grandpa died [around 1906] just before the earthquake. Then we moved to Swartz road north of the Sebastopol cemetery. We lived near the Whites, and next door to Mrs. Wren. The Whites came out from Alabama and so did the Wrens.) [On the Burnett Street property is a garage that was used to store the printing equipment after the San Francisco earthquake of 1906].

**What about your birthday?**

Well, not as much, no. As those two days.

**Was that because it wasn't a big family gathering?**

I guess so, yeah. I liked them all.

**Did you have Easter egg hunts?**

Oh, yes, we always had stuff like that. Papa and Mama, I guess, dyed the eggs, and the girls.

**Fireworks on the fourth of July?**

Oh yes, firecrackers and stuff like that. We stayed home. They always had Fourth of July celebration in town, but I don't remember ever going downtown or to see a parade.

**Where did you go on picnics?**

Well, by that time we had a car, and we'd go up to Barrel Springs, or up to Maacama school yard, that was vacant, and Armstrong Grove. They were about the three main ones.

**Did you go with other members of the family or just with your parents and siblings?**

No, different ones came, oh yes. Mostly family.

**When your parents had visitors what did they do?**

Sit around and visit. The kids, if there was any, never stayed in the house much, unless it was raining or the weather was bad.

**Did you get along with your siblings?**

We never had any trouble. Oh, we had fights once in a while, but it was okay. Joy used to play tricks on me. We played hide and seek, things like that in the evening, after supper. We usually ate about six o'clock. And we all had to come in there. If we didn't want to eat, we didn't have to, but you had to leave the table.

**So if there was something on the table you didn't like, you didn't have to eat it?**

My dad always used to say, "Now, if you don't want it, (that's not to me, to all of us) you don't have to eat it, but you leave the table. Your mother worked hard to produce that food, and if you don't like it, that's up to you, but you've got to leave the table, you can't just sit here. He was very strict about that. He needed to be, you know, four kids, and you got to keep 'em in hand or they get away from you.

**Did you have to leave the table very often?**

No I don't think so.

**What kind of food did your mother cook?**

Fried potatoes, fried pork - there was three things that was the staple of the American...of the McDonald family, which was fried potatoes, pork chops and beans - dry beans. Put 'em on the stove and cook 'em all day. Well, Mama liked the white beans, navy beans, that was her favorite, but the rest of us, we ate any beans that they shoved at us. She'd season 'em with pork chops, something like that. We always had a dessert, tapioca was one of the favorites, tapioca pudding, and then she would make the custard, and on Sunday, if there was any left over she'd make a



vinegar dip, that was her specialty. We always liked that to pour over the custard.

**Did your family say grace?**

Always said grace at the table.

**Did you eat about the same time every day?**

As I remember, we ate about six o'clock (in the evening), because, you see, papa got through at five, and by the time he walked home, maybe sometimes he'd have to do a little shopping, it'd be about six o'clock.

**What about breakfast and lunch?**

We always had breakfast, usually oatmeal mush - there wasn't much lunch gathering. If we was home, like on a weekend, we got hungry, we went in and got a piece of bread, stuff like that, there was no big meal.

**Did you have special places to sit?**

Well, yes, there was Mama at the head and Papa at the foot. The table wasn't too big, I don't know if it was square - and then the two girls and me - after Charles, two on a side.

**What are some things you remember about your mother in particular?**

Oh, I still love her, you know that. That's the trouble we got into here with my family when she was going downhill and they sent her to the hospital and I just stood up for her, That's why the family was mad at me for years, especially Nell, cause she was the boss - Nell got so she was awful bossy - and after Mom went down at the rest home - she fell or something and broke her leg, broke something, and they sent her to the hospital - and after awhile - she was there several months - she was back at the rest home. So I went down to Dr. Viera, he was the doctor for the county, for old people, and he said, "She shouldn't be there, she should be back in the hospital." So I went over to the hospital, your mother and me, and we told them what the doctor said, and he said - well, he wouldn't even listen. And so we said, "The doctor said, if you want to, you call him and have him tell you." He wouldn't do it. To the doctor, [her doctor in the hospital] I said, "Well, Dr. Viera said to you to call," and he wouldn't call, so I said, "We're going to stay right here until you do call." So he said, "Well, okay, go out and wait in the hall." So we went out in the hall and waited and after about a half hour he came out and said, "The ambulance is on the way over there to bring her back." Well, we left. Well, of course, that just infuriated Nell. Vee was the...run the hospital. Her name was Vee, Venus Monroe.

**It was a real hospital?**

No it was a rest home. In order to get a certain license she had to have twenty-four hour nurses. She didn't have it. She had...I forgot, ambulatory or some - Nell listened to her, and she filled Nell up full of bull. I didn't get along too well with Vee, we had a roundup a time or two, and that's all Nell needed, somebody to back her up, see, and she [Nell] never had any use for me after that. So Charles called up, and wanted us to come over on a Sunday morning, I think, as a family gathering, and I said, "Well, I don't think I'll be very welcome," and he said, "Oh, it'll be okay, come ahead." So we both went over and Nell tied in to me and she tied in to your mother. She really was hoary-eyed. Anyway, never had any use for anybody after that. Charles, he was alright, and his wife was - in order to keep on good terms with Charles, with Joy, and naturally Nell, why she [Charles' wife, Frances] went along with her [with Nell].



So Harold [Nell's husband] and Nell, they were both - they said what they thought whether - you know what I mean - there was no diplomatic thing about it at all, so that's why for years, we didn't have anything to do with them. If we saw Charles in town we were very friendly, but we knew that Frances and Nell were like this [crosses his fingers] - you know your mother. She got down on somebody she was down - you know.

**Describe your mother as she was when you were growing up.**

Very loving, wasn't demonstrative, but she was always looking out for her kids. Oh, I loved my mother.

**And your father?**

I did him, too. We were just like that, [crosses his fingers to indicate closeness] we were friends. When we were married - we married out at Nettie's folks. Charles and Mama were there. Now this is what Ruth told me, Ruth Dollar - that when they went home, after the wedding, of course Papa knew he'd lost his son, and he went out behind something and cried. It hit him that way because I'd left home. Anyway, that's what Ruth said. We never asked him. We were always very close, Papa and me. He never upbraided me, or anything when I was growing up. If I did something wrong, he told me, and that's all there was to it. But he didn't hold it against me. We were very close, and I think probably - Nell said - well I was the favorite, and she kind of held it against me.

**What about Joy?**

As long as it didn't bother her, that's all she cared about. If it didn't upset her, okay what happened. She didn't care. She had a - well, she was a kind of outlaw, that way, she was gonna do what Joy wanted, and she could get away with it.

Now, this is not about them, this is about me.

**Did you have any pets?**

Oh, I always had rabbits.

**Rabbits!**

My main thing was rabbits, and pigeons, I had a lot of pigeons one time, and then I always had rabbits for years, see.

**And what did you do with them?**

Ate 'em - not for profit, see.

**Were they really pets, then?**

No, not pets

**So you didn't have any pets?**

Not - oh, I always had dogs. Mostly terriers - fox terriers - and I had a bulldog a fellow gave me once. I went up to when Ruth and Ern lived up on what they called the Rollin Ranch - Healdsburg, they had a acre or two of berries, and I went up there to pick berries, gone a couple of weeks, they was four miles into town. And everyday Ern would take down what berries was picked - horse and buggy. I forget how many I picked. Anyway, while we were gone this bulldog got lonesome, I guess, and he got down around Lunsford's [on Virginia Street in Sebastopol]. I don't know what they'd got to doin'. Anyway, when - he had a great big mouth, and when he got ahold of something you had to choke him to get him loose - to let go. I would run in and grab him and choke and and then he was okay. Anyway, I was gone, and he went down around Lunsford's or something I don't know what he was doing - I never found out - and somebody took a club or a board and hit over the eyes and killed him.

**How did you feel?**

Oh, I felt bad, but then, you know, I didn't grieve over it. Anyway,



that's what happened to him. I liked all of 'em but he was different. His name was Muggs - Muggsy. I would have been twelve or thirteen.

**Did your family have any superstitions?**

The only one in the family was Ruth, and she wouldn't eat if there was thirteen at the table. They didn't comment but they didn't think much of it.

**Was anyone in your family good at crafts, good with their hands?**

My dad, he could grind valves and take an engine apart. He was pretty well mechanical, cause when they set the Linotype up in the newspaper, they sent a fellow along to show him how to run it, and he [the fellow] went off on a drunk, and he couldn't do anything, so my dad learned it himself.

**How far did your parents go in school?**

Well, she went through high school, and then, course, he came from the East on the train when he was seven, and they were out around Dixon, and I don't think he went to high school. My mother learned to play the piano when she was growing up.

**Did you sing around the piano when you were a child?**

Oh, yes, we were great for singing, if any of us had a special song, Mama always played it, she played whatever we wanted. I had a very happy childhood.

**Were there tough times when you were growing up?**

Children never had tough times. You didn't expect much, and if you wanted something, and your folks said "I can't afford it", that was it. We didn't whine and cry around

**Was there every anything that you really wanted but couldn't have, like a bicycle....**

Oh yes, naturally, a bicycle or something that other kids had, but I never whined about it. I never wanted anything, as I remember. A new bicycle would cost maybe a hundred dollars, I just never thought of it.

**Who handled the money?**

Well Mama did all the shopping. I don't know if there was any handling the money. If she wanted to go shopping, she'd say, far as I remember, she'd say "Frank, I've got to go shopping today," and he'd say "Well, Ma, how much do you want," and maybe she'd say fifteen or twenty, whatever it was. There wasn't too much to handle.

**Do you remember if your mother wore perfume?**

I don't remember 'Course it would always be in her room. We never played in her room.

**You mentioned something about one of your grandfathers and a barrel?**

Oh, that was Grandpa McDonald. Yes, he wasn't too big, but he was built heavy - he had practically double teeth all the way around, and built like a bulldog. And some of the relatives - this was back east before he came out - they said they'd seen Dave McDonald take a empty barrel by his teeth and throw it over his head. That would probably be about fifty pounds.

**Anything about your folks you didn't understand until later?**

In what way? To me they was always just a happy mother and father. They probably had things but they never discussed it before the kids. As far as I know they were happy with circumstances.

**Did either of them have a special saying?**

Hers was "For the love of Mary Kelly." I remember that, that's the only one.



## THE HOME ON PLEASANT HILL ROAD

Today we went down and met the people who are living in the house you grew up in. Tell us about that house.

Papa started building there in 1909. Before that we lived on Swartz Avenue, a couple of miles from the property. He sold that and Mrs. White and Sid came out from Alabama and they were neighbors or knew the Wrens when they were in Alabama, so they, someway - I don't know how - I was a kid - they bought our place on Swartz Avenue. Then Papa went up to Sterling City to see Uncle Alvin and Uncle Will, and he bought the place out there, about a mile and a quarter from town. [On Pleasant Hill Road North, northwest of the Pleasant Hill Cemetery, off Bodega Highway]. Uncle Will and Papa had built this little house for Grandma Mac, up on the road - they liked it back there where it is now, so they had George Covert come in and cut a road down through there so they could haul the lumber, from Uncle - the mill at Freestone - The lumber came from your mother's uncle, Uncle Jeff Bruce. He was off in there southwest of the town, the road went down and he had his mill in there. What lumber was there was close, and they had - one fellow with ox - one of the Finley's had an ox team and he hauled logs from those canyons up in there. That was in 1909 and we went over that Sunday. Hess Lumber Company was one of the main buyers for the mill that Jeff run. So we went over there on Sunday - what happened I don't know - anyway, we got the lumber from them. They used Hess's big team to haul it home and stacked it over where the house is.

Was the road wide enough for a span of oxen?

No, this was not oxen, this was six horses from Hess Lumber Company. Anyway, he [Papa] built the house for eleven hundred dollars. That was including Mr. Wren's wage. I think he was getting two and a half a day. he was the carpenter.

Where did you live while the house was being built?

We had a tent right under that big oak tree on the west side. It was different bushes than it is now - 'course that's been pretty near eighty years ago.

That would have been eighty-six years, since you're ninety-two. Pretty close between eighty-five and ninety.

What kind of conveniences were in the house when it was first built?

Just a wood stove, a cook stove, and then they had a big heater, big wood heater in the living room, could heat that whole part of the house. That's where we used to sit in the evenings after we got through supper, cause that was the warmest place, and Papa always liked to sit there with his pipe in his mouth and read the paper.

What did your house look like?

No upstairs, my room was off the kitchen, Nell and Joy's was off the living room and Papa and Mama's was off the front room.

You had a room to yourself?

When the house was built it was built for a bathroom - it was small - and they never got a bathroom put up in there, so I had a cot there and slept in that room. See, there was a little hall when you walked into the living room you went through this little hall where the telephone was, and my room was off there, then the other hall went right into the living room. Between the kitchen and the living room was a china closet. From the kitchen you went into the pantry and there was doors.



You could get out of the pantry or go around and get the dishes out of the living room.

**Did you have a closet for your clothes, or a dresser?**

No not much. She'd hang up the clothes at the foot of the bed, hang 'em up on the hangar - nothing laying on the floor.

**Did you have pictures on the walls?**

No, not that I remember

**Did you ever daydream out the window?**

Well the bedroom window was up high, cause it was built for a bathroom. I couldn't look out.

**It always seemed to me that it was a two storey house. What was underneath the living area?**

A nine foot underpinning. Mama always had that down there for her canned stuff. A big basement, down in the front was as high as this room here. See it was on a side hill, the back part wasn't more than a foot and a half off the ground. The front part was 8 or 9 feet.

**There was a creek that ran by the house. Did you play in it?**

Well there wasn't much to play in, no. Down in the woods, yes, but the water, there wasn't enough water to play in. There was a live spring over at the Rushen's, right over across the fence, that's where that Calder Creek started that goes down through town. The Rushens were up on the northwest corner. Manfred Rushen.

**Do you remember the view from your house?**

Orchard and natural trees along the creek, couldn't see out much. Couldn't see the neighbors houses.

**What about visitors?**

Well, 'course the visitors - when they were going to church they used to have a quite a lot of visitors on Sunday, and then they had the relatives - one favorite was Mr. and Mrs. Henley from up in the hills there, up in Windsor. They were about the only people that had an automobile and he was hard of hearing and when they come down - Papa and him they were great, good pals - they would get right up next to him and talk right in his ear so he could hear them.

**Did you read much when you were a boy?**

Oh, yes, western stories, and children's books, whatever they had for my age. We all read. It was never discouraged, always encouraged.

**Did you ever get anything in the mail?**

Once in a while from some relative back east. From Iowa. Mama had more - she had Aunt Kate and she had more relatives than Papa did, that wrote. I don't know about the ones who never wrote. Of course women usually respond more than men. They do.

**When visitors came to your house did they knock on the door or was there a doorbell?**

There was a doorbell. The front porch was ten feet off the ground. I think there was always a doorbell - according to who they were - friends came to the kitchen door. The front door was locked, I don't remember the back door being locked.

**What rooms did you use the most?**

Well, we lived mostly in the kitchen. There was a dining room. When Papa wanted to go in and read he always built up a fire in the dining room stove and he'd sit there. 'Course the winter time it's different than what it is now, it got dark and the house got cold, had to have a fire.

**Was there a fireplace?**

No fireplace. Just the one heater for heat. You opened the door and the



other rooms would get warm, but that was the only wood heat.

**How did you keep your food cold?**

Well, it was just - course in the winter time it was always cool back in the pantry, and in the summertime I don't remember. We didn't have an icebox.

**Did you have a milk cow?**

I think mostly it was evaporated milk. Sometimes we'd get milk from a neighbor's - mostly the neighbors was Doty's - and if they had extra milk we would get - I don't know - there was no regular deliveries.

**Did you go shopping with your mother for groceries?**

Not too much, she used to go down and get her groceries and then ride home with Papa in the car.

**Earlier you talked about the horse and buggy.**

We had the horse and buggy when we first went there, and Mama used to deliver eggs to Santa Rosa, and this horse - she got so she was afraid to drive, I think she just refused to deliver the eggs because he would start home from Santa Rosa. and he would beat the electric car. They had stops to make, you know between here and Santa Rosa, probably ten or fifteen stops if they had passengers, and he would take off with the bit in his teeth and she couldn't stop - she was afraid of him.

**She was a tiny woman, under five feet tall.**

And sometimes she would beat the electric car into Sebastopol.

**That was a long trip.**

Seven miles. The horse had been a Nevada mustang, and somebody had captured him. [The man who bought the horse from Frank McDonald] was a carpenter, related to the Lunsfords - Harmon, Will Harmon - and he got it to haul stuff for his job and so he traded Papa, traded him for an old Studebaker car. That's where we got our first car.

You said your mother played the piano. Did you have a radio?

Not when I was a kid, there was no such thing. Not until after the first world war.

**Was it a quiet or a noisy house.**

Quiet - course when you got two sisters somebody was always talking - I don't remember it ever being quiet, you know what I mean

**Was there any place that scared you, the basement, dark corners?**

No

**Any special place you felt really comfortable and safe?**

Well, the home, I felt that way at home. The house was the home.



**Was there a lawn or flowers?**

Mama always raised a few flowers. She never had very many. When she did the washing I always packed water from the creek to fill the washing machine. There wasn't much to do around the house. Keeping the wood box filled. Getting up in the morning and building a fire - cold - I had certain chores to do.

**Was the creek your main water source?**

We used to pack water from the well over at Grandma Mac's and then later years when Papa got chickens we dug a well down in the bottom and got a - some kind of a pump from Sears and Roebuck in order for the water for the chickens and then piped it up to the house, too.

**What was your favorite season?**

Summertime, I guess. School was out, and the kids could go fishing and this and that - carefree time. Take care of the garden. I always had a lot of garden to hoe, and down in the bottom we always had a good big garden down there, popcorn, sweet corn, green beans, tomatoes and Mama used to can all that stuff that she could.

**Down in the bottom - was that near the creek?**

Down in the flat before you crossed the creek - come down the hill, there's an old chicken house there now, and that was all in garden.

**Close to the water supply.**

Well we didn't need water down there, there was moisture all the time. The water table was shallow. Always had plenty of moisture. You'd take and hoe it and work it and the moisture was right there, you see. Never had to water.

**What time did you go to bed?**

At dark.

**Do you remember the summers as being hot?**

Oh I don't remember, you know kids don't pay much attention to the heat, and this and that.

**What improvements were added to the house besides running water?**

The telephone was put in. The phone come in from the west through Rushen's place, not from the front but from the side where the Rushens brought the telephone down, and then it was brought into the house. That was the first convenience we had, was the telephone. Charles put the flush toilet in after I left home. He built that back room into a toilet - back porch.

**Any childhood diseases?**

The only sickness I ever remember was the time I had - that was along in the middle teens, I lost about fifteen pounds - not shingles but - jaundice. I was pretty sick. Mama was working in the shop, they had the shop going then and she was busy and she'd put me to bed when she left and I stayed there all day. Oh I was sick, now I know. I had yellow jaundice, and my eyeballs turned yellow and my skin turned yellow, but I survived. That was the only real sickness I ever had

**Were they any big storms?**

Well in the winter we used to have some terrific storms, and the wind - walk home from school and you'd be walking right against the wind and you'd get home just sopping wet. Well, Mama always had a fire going in the heater and we'd change my clothes and hang them up in the living room. We didn't suffer..

**Do you remember any special cooking smells?**

Oh she used to make bread pretty near every Saturday and then we would - the dough was left she'd make cinnamon rolls. Oh, of course we was



always ready for that smell.

**Was there a library in town? Did you use it?**

Yes the old Carnegie library it was put in after the first world war, on Bodega Avenue. Same place it is now. I didn't go

**What were your favorite games?**

Well, indoors was Crokinole. Outdoor - hide-and-seek I guess.

**Cards?**

We used to play cards - when Papa wasn't there. He wouldn't allow any card packs in the house. When he was young he lived over at Dixon. He used to play in country dances, barn dances, a little band, and I guess he saw a lot of stuff he didn't like. So he just - no - he could see the danger of cards how kids would get addicted to it - so when Charles hurt his eye - he was laid up for several months - he was in the last year of high school, I think, so when he was settin' there all alone and his eye was all inflamed, couldn't see, so Mama brought in a deck of cards but it was never around when Papa was home.

**Your dad played in a band?**

Oh, yes, he played the baritone horn. He said the only instrument he couldn't get music out of was the violin.

**Did he ever play at the house?**

Oh, when the time was right

**Did you spend much time walking around your neighborhood?**

Well, I used to have a twenty-two I'd go out and hunt birds and rabbits.

**How many neighbors did you have?**

Well there was Doty down there, old Chris Muggy up by the front gate, and then there was the Rushens and they sold out and then there was a Roberts, he came and fixed the pump house for us, and he lived there, then the Silvas lived up on the other road. Well there was one friend I had, he lived over on Pillow Lane and your mother went to school with him, Coppige, Phil Coppige. He was about that age when we would go to Santa Rosa to the show on the car. [The electric car] We was pretty good pals. He was from - his folks had come down from Windsor, he used to live on Starr Road, and they lived over on Pillow Lane, and we were good friends, Phil and I. We'd go to the show, we got around seventeen, eighteen. One year your mother, they lived out there in the valley and of course Phil had gone to school with her and she got to working in the shop and I knew where she lived and so if we went to the show, Phil and I, I'd always toot the horn [if he was driving the car - not on the electric car - and wave to her when we went by. Then we got to going together after that and that was about the last I saw of Phil

**So you didn't remain friends after you met Mom?**

Oh, we were friends, but we didn't go to the show, I always has a girl with me

**What was a perfect day when you were a child?**

Most any day was a perfect day. Setting at the table with my family, that was always the end of the day. First memory that stuck with me was with my grandfather. They lived in town and I was about three. I was born in 1903 and he died in 1906. And so I remember he was in his chair and I was standing between his knees and outdoors there was a cow in a vacant lot and I said to him, I can remember just as plain "Grandpa, who's that cow belong to?" He said, "Well, that's old man Sereghino's cow." He lived right at the end of the street, and this vacant lot was right west of where Grandpa lived [On Burnett Street] that's the only thing I remember of grandfather [McDonald{}].



Is that house gone now?

No it's still there, may have been remodeled some. There were two houses right together, both the same, and when your mother and I got to going over there that winter to the recorder's office, got to looking up way back and it came to where it was recorded my grandfather and my father both bought these two houses in town, I suppose ten dollars a month and we saw where they were recorded.

What did your neighborhood sound like at night?  
Was asleep!

What was it like in the summer?

I know once in a while I used to go fishing with the Lunsfords, that was an occasion, stuff like that

#### SCHOOL DAYS

What was the name of your school?

Sebastopol Grammar School. [On Bodega Ave. where Parkside School is now]

How far did you go in school?

Till the eighth grade.

Was that pretty normal in those days?

No, most kids went to high school.

What did you do when you left school?

Well, I went right in working with my dad in the print shop within a short time. [Later he says that he didn't begin working in the print shop until he was about seventeen, so that would have been three or four years later.]

Was that like an apprenticeship, learning a trade?  
Yeah, right.

Can you tell us one thing you remember most about going to school?

On the way home one day I met a woman. She was on a walking tour of the Sebastopol region. She worked for one of the city papers. Every day she would write in her experiences for that day. And it was Rose Wilder Lane.

Who was she?

She was the daughter of Laura Ingalls Wilder who wrote The Little House on the Prairie books. [Rose Wilder Lane also wrote The Young Pioneers]

Anything else?

Well, I used to walk to school, there's a lane down through the neighbors. It wasn't on Luther Burbank's property, but it was just over the fence. He would be out there, sometimes working on his - he had hundreds, thousands of - like a nursery, different kinds of trees and shrubs and that's where he propagated them - like his Burbank potato that was propagated, and another thing was his spineless cactus. He was well renowned all over the world for what he had done and that was his experimental garden, back in the west edge of Sebastopol.

What kind of subjects did they teach in school? What was school like for you?

Oh, I don't remember - we had the course laid out by the county superintendent, every other school in the district had the same, but just what subjects, I don't remember now.

Reading, writing, arithmetic?

Oh, I see, Oh yes, we had all the reading, writing, arithmetic, oral, we had times in certain days of the week we'd have oral subject. The professor would say what is so and so and then they'd say your name and



you were supposed to just stand up and give the right answer. I liked that, I was good at that. Then I was awful good at arithmetic, I think that was about my favorite subject.

**What about poetry?**

Oh we had them, oh yes I remember some of the - Sir Walter Scott, "The stag at eve had drunk his fill..." Passages I remember, see. We had to memorize poems.

**How many students were there?**

Well, I would judge there was three or four hundred. Eight grades, eight rooms, four rooms below, four rooms above, four grades below, four grades above. Each room held about forty kids apiece, so it would be about three hundred. Pretty good size classes. Some of 'em doubled up first and second, too, if they got too much on one. They would double up classes, some years. The building was made of redwood. When the kids would walk up and down the stairs the whole building would shake.

**Were there rules like no running in the halls, no chewing gum?**

Wasn't too strict. If you acted up they would - "you leave the room, now." Maybe have to stay out and stand in the hall for half - three quarters of an hour, and the teacher would let you come back in, but no kids getting beat like they would be later. They had rules, sure. If you disobeyed them you were going to get called on them

**Did you do any singing?**

At Thanksgiving we had singing. Yeah, at the school we used to go "Thanksgiving Day is coming, the glad Thanksgiving Day  
We count the nights and mornings that slowly pass away..."

**The first world war started when you were in school, do you remember that?**

Oh yes, but then it was a long ways off, you know. Not like it is now, the communications were slower. We wasn't in the war 'till 18. We wasn't in it too long. See Wilson's slogan when he got reelected was "He kept us out of the war." It wasn't very long until we got into the war, see.

**At fifteen would you have had to go in?**

Well I would have had to register just a short while after the Armistice was signed. That was in November, 1918. I didn't want to go, I was too bashful to go in the camp, you know, didn't know where you'd be sent. No I was glad I didn't. We were just almost isolated as far as participating and having anything to do with the war, because Papa didn't have to go, he had four kids and he was too old. I remember when the war ended. we got the news on the 11th of November about nine o'clock in the morning, and all the whistles and everything in the town started blowing. So I had been driving the old Studebaker, hauling apples for that year, so we all got in the car, put on all the ribbons we had and everything - we all went downtown. I can remember that, and everybody was all - they was crazed. But everybody had a whistle, the barbershop shot anvils and all this an that, making noise. I was past fifteen, so I think you had to register when you was sixteen. So it would have been a few months, from November to August, that I'd a had to register. I don't mean they'd a taken me.

**Do you ever wish you had gone on to finish high school?**

No I can't say if I - yeah - oh, sometimes I think that kids that went to school with me - some went ahead further and probably a lot further, and probably a lot didn't.

**What do you mean, "went ahead?"**

Well, they got to be better positions



**Do you think they were any happier?**

I don't know. I know they used to come to me for advice. So I don't know.

**How would your life have been different?**

Well, I think I would have been able to communicate with other people more, I wouldn't be the way I am now, not able to get out and express myself, be able to form words and put them in expression. Going to school you learn a little bit every day.

**You've done a lot of reading in your life. Would you consider that a kind of education?**

I suppose so

**Did you sit at tables or desks?**

Desks, everybody had a desk. When we wrote on the walls it was chalk, and then at the desk it was pens or pencils. We wrote on school paper, big sheets, tablets.

**Did you eat lunch at school?**

Yeah we always took a bag lunch, paper bag, or a box, everybody ate lunch at school. I walked down Robinson Road, down through Doty's, most of the time. And then there was a trail went through Muggy's and went right down past the nursery [Luther Burbank] there was an alley way, Lydings had chickens on the south, there was a chicken fence and then there was a stock fence on the north and this lane was about five or six feet wide, see, and we walked down through there.

**What was your first grade teacher's name?**

June Jones. She was an old maid but everybody liked her. She was nice, you always thought a lot of June Jones. Still do. You didn't get up in those days and have a conversation with the teacher unless they called you for something. She taught there, first grade teacher for years and years. I guess she finally retired there. We always had the pledge of allegiance in the morning before we started up the stairs. That was every morning.

**Who was your best friend?**

Ansel Bulletti. We used to go fishing a time or two. Ansel and I always got along good and his brother - Tilly - I just never got along with him, but Ansel was more of my style, and I thought a lot of Ansel. He used to live up there, his dad did, right next to Nat Sereghino. They were both Italians and were always fighting each other and the old man Bulletti, he was always going to do something to Nat and Nat would laugh about him - but he lived right there on the corner of Murphy when you come down the hill when you make the turn right by the laundry.

**Did you ever have a club or anything like that?**

I joined the scouts once, but I don't remember - we went for hikes, but I don't remember. It wasn't too active.

**What kind of games did you play at recess?**

Mostly running games, you know how kids have to run off their steam, and then we'd get a ball game up of some kind and then Doc Staten, [Oscar Staten] he'd come out and he'd play with us, and oh we just thought that was wonderful. He was the principal and the teacher, too. Everybody called him Doc. He wanted to be a doctor when he was growing up, and he studied for that, and then for some reason or other he wound up a principal. Everybody always called him Doc Staten.

When I was in the first grade Papa came home one night and he said, "We have a little job down at the shop and if you're interested you can come



down the next day after school and look at it." So I did that, and back in those days they had stuff that they could buy was called boiler plate, and if you had an edition coming out of your weekly paper and you didn't have enough news to cover all of it, you could take this boiler plate and cut that up any size you want to fill in. Everything that printed had to be "type-high," no matter what kind of printing or type. You cut out the printing that you wanted [off the boiler plate] and then when everything went to press and we nailed this boiler plate, it was very thin - on a block of wood to make it type-high. So then of course after they filled this boiler plate in, the news it was dead and wasn't worth anything again. On the boiler plate was things that happened, unimportant things - filler - to fill up blank spaces in the paper. After it was printed it was dead copy same as if it had been hand set. Then that was thrown into a box and was accumulated and that's what this fellow wanted me to do, was to take this boiler plate with a chisel, take it off of the - and when you got through you had the piece of wood and the boiler plate - it was dead. and then after I did that - it took me a couple of hours - that boiler plate was sent back to the firm you bought it from and you got a certain amount of money for the old, dead boiler plate. They would melt it down and recast it, whatever they wanted. All the newspapers back in those days at some time had to use boiler plate in order to fill up all the sheets. You could look through this box and you could pick out what you wanted to put in your paper. So I did that - I made 75 cents, and I was sure proud of that - I worked in the newspaper - money making.

#### PRINTING

**You didn't work any more in the printing business until you were seventeen or eighteen?**

No. My father, Frank McDonald, started the shop in the teens in Sebastopol. And when I got about seventeen, Papa came home and said, "Well, Mama and I've got too much work, we need more help, do you want to come in and learn to feed press when we need you? Then I would work on the ranch, pruning and stuff like that, [when not working at the shop] and I said yes, and I went in and learned the printing trade - feeding the press and getting kind of a printer's devil, and then I took it on from there. Mama learned to distribute type, dead type back in the case, and she did that. She kept busy, she took care of the books, too.

**Who took care of the house while she worked at the shop?**

She did

**She worked and took care of the house, too?**

Oh yes, sure.

**Did she work eight hours a day?**

Eight hours - she went in with Papa and came home with him. And then when things piled up in the house - she didn't work everyday, but they worked it together so that wash day and stuff like that it wouldn't pile up.

**Were your sisters already married by this time?**

I don't remember much about them, wasn't much interested in my sisters.

**What kind of printing work did you do?**

Well, with my father's it was all letterheads, commercial printing, and after I got into the other jobs a little later it was all social



stationary, wedding announcements, and stuff like that. In 1945, we did all the printing for the delegates to the United Nations, when it had its first meeting in San Francisco. I could kick myself because I didn't save any samples of that work. I worked at that until I retired in '68 [After he had congestive heart failure]

**Did you have a specific job, a title?**

Compositor First you have to learn the case. Now the case was a tray and on the left it has lower case, from "a" to "z", and all the other things you needed, and on the caps side you had all your cap letters. Like the word The, you'd pick your "T" out of the caps and pick up the "h", "e", or whatever it was, a proper name or not. Everything you needed was in that case. You could take any form or any copy you had and you could set it out of that one case.

Some letters had more numbers than others - like an "e" - there'd be a lot of "e"s a lot of "a"s, a lot of "t"s, - your capital side was A,B,C,D,E, like that, but your lower case was fitted up - different words had different letters - like the - that was a word that was used a lot - it didn't run in rotation, it ran in different spots - when you set type, different combinations you use more than others - and like the word the - your "t" would be here and your "h" would be here and the "e" would be down here. [indicating that placement of the lower case letters did not follow normal alphabetical order] Lower case was figured up years and years ago so you could use that rhythm and set type faster. The words that had the combinations you used most of was laid out on your tray so that you could get that motion.

You had your type stick. Keep in your left hand, if you was right handed - you could set the type stick for, say, twenty-five - a column is about fifteen picas, normal newspaper column - and then you could adjust this stick for any width you want, it had a thing that pulled up and it had little holes and you could move this stick back to line up with the hole you'd want, and you had this stick that would maybe take twenty-five picas, so it was whole lot of learning to do, but being that I was in the second - third generation, it just come natural for me, it didn't take long to learn 'em. Each case was a different size type, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 point, according to whatever it is.

**So if you were setting a newspaper story, the body of the story might be in 10 or 12, but then what about headlines?**

We'll say your stick was set for 14 points, or picas, well you'd have a heading, probably 50 or 60 picas, you'd adjust this to take care of that heading.

**You set the body first, and then the headline.**

Right. And then the main part of distributing type was to keep your font clean. I don't mean cleaning it, but distribute it so a letter in every box it belongs in. If you missed this box several times on the letter "h", you might have some other letter in there.

**Then you'd have typos.**

Yeah, that's right, then you'd have a mess in your hands. When you'd take a proof of it, here you got all the foreign letters in the different boxes. So the main thing was to distribute it and have a clean case.

**What about cleaning the type?**

Well, we had high-test gas and it was wiped every time you pulled a



proof when they got through. Then if it got, sometimes a little bitta type would get fouled up a little bit, well, you would take that font and if it was dirty you'd try to clean it up through a high-test gas, something like that. Unless it was high up in the form, you'd have to use a rag, but if it was locked up like that you could use a brush.

**What other tricks of the trade did you learn?**

Well, the main thing was to space each line. If you had a line that was tight for whatever size you wanted your column, so when you locked it up it didn't drop out, and you had a line next to it that was soft - the main thing was to - when you set a job, try and get each so when you locked it up the type didn't drop through. And there was all different little spacers, oh yes, you didn't learn it overnight.

**You've said you didn't work in the newspaper, but only in the print shop. You must have had to use a lot of creativity.**

That's right, that's why when Jack come in - he was one of the bosses, and he would go on these trips - and he'd come up to an agent, whatever his business was, and this fellow would have copies typed up, and he says, "Here's what I want, I don't know what I want, but here's what I want." So by that time, I was head man in the shop, and Jack said, when he came home, "Well, I go into this store, and this fellow says, 'I got this for some advertising campaign, I don't know what I want,'" And Jack says, "Give it to me, I've got a fellow up there, you'll be satisfied, he knows what he's doing." So he would send the job in and tell Lucille, "Tell Lowell to do anything he wants to it." And he told this fellow, "He's a whiz." And so I did that and they'd send the proof back and he'd go in about the job and this fellow said "That was just what I wanted." That was because I could look at that copy, and I could visualize and I know about what he wants, and I could visualize how that type will look in different sizes, if you didn't put each line the same. You always had a leader - well, you've worked with it, you know - the important lines had the biggest type and this and that. So, I learnt that from experience, I didn't just pick it up, see. And it got so Charley Meyers was the same way. He was a great visualizer when he wanted something, but he just didn't know what. After I got the confidence and I told myself to not set it the way he wants it, but the way I think it should be set, then if he don't like it, he can change it, he's got something to compare. So he would get an idea of something and call me into the office and tell me what he wanted and he'd give me the copy and I'd go out an set it, pull a proof. So he'd look at it, you know, "It's just what I want." He didn't know how to get it. That was experience. After it got that way I wouldn't have changed jobs for anything.

When Papa died we were both working fairly steady at Art Point [Frank had sold his business to Art Point Studios - another printing business], Charley's [Charley Meyers] business and Papa died in '29. Just before the depression started..

**What about the newspaper, the Analy Standard?**

They [David P. McDonald and his father] started the newspaper in Suisun. We got some big pictures here, taken in front, then they went to Windsor. Then from there they went to Sebastopol, sometime after 1898, [when Joy was born in Windsor]. My grandfather [David Harrison McDonald] had worked on the ranch at Dixon, on the wheat ranch. I don't know just exactly how he got into the newspaper business. That was before my time and they never reminisced about it. The Standard sold out to the Times



after the earthquake. My father sold the Standard to - well - it wasn't called the Times then, it was a religious paper this fellow started, and then between then and when he sold to the Times I just don't know.

**When did your father start the printing shop?**

We started that - during the war, in the teens, he started that. Before that he worked at the Times. The Times had moved down on South Main Street. They had been on North Main Street about the middle of the block - west side of the street, [about where the East-West Cafe is now] Papa used to park up above by where that big cypress tree is, and walk down just south of where Copperfield's is. [Afterwards, Metcalf's hardware was in there.] Harry Luchins was the editor. Was a kind of syndicate of business men in Sebastopol - Cecil Burroughs, he had a big dry-goods store - and they wanted to keep the paper going. You know, town of Sebastopol, with no newspaper was gone, so they kept it going and about every two or three years, they would hire somebody for editor. Then if they didn't pan out, they'd get somebody else. So they got Harry Luchins, and the business men around town didn't like him, he was just - well he was just a fellow you couldn't talk to - and he'd make promises and they wouldn't pan out. Consequently, Papa ran the newspaper. That was the Times, the Sebastopol Times. So all the business men, when they wanted a job, they all contacted Papa, and talked with him - he was getting four dollars a day, and the word got around that he was going to start his own job shop, not a newspaper, just a print shop. 'Course Harry heard about it, and he raised his wages to four dollars and a half a day. Well that made Papa mad - well not mad - you know. Anyway, he gave Harry a certain time that he was going to quit, and this day come and Papa quit, and Walter Monroe was the banker. Papa didn't have the money, like that, to buy a shop, so Walter and him talked about it, and Papa said, "Well, now, this certain day I'm going to the City to buy some equipment, different houses." He went down by train to Sausalito, took the ferry over and back. So Walter said, "Okay, Mac, that's fine, how much money do you want?" Papa said, "Don't know, I don't know how much stuff's going to be." So Walter said, "Well, Mac, you go to the City, you buy your shop, whatever it is, and send me the bill, and I'll make it good. He wanted Papa to go in business. So he did that, and I think the whole thing came to about eighteen-hundred dollars. Second-hand presses, type and everything. It was a good little print shop. So when the bills come, Monroe paid 'em, and Papa was in debt for that. He [Monroe] was a great friend of Patchy's, too, when they was over on the coast, and he'd come over and they'd go quail hunting together, and they got along fine. So that's the way he got started. Well, I was through grammar school, it was about 1918, and I was taking care of the orchard, handling the crop, working up at Wedges, picking apples, and Papa came home one day for dinner, Papa and Mama, and they said, "Well, the work is getting a little more than I can handle." That's what happened, because he was well liked, he was good, honest, wasn't gouging anybody. He said, "I'd like to have you come in, in the morning, and learn to feed press."

'Course the next morning I went to town to go to work. And the first work I printed was shopping tags for Stillings' Grocery. They was about so wide and each clerk carried that. Now you come in, you didn't go pick up what you wanted, he asked you what you was after, then they would get it together, and put it in your - no cafeteria at that time. There was



just a counter, they took the orders and got it, from wherever they kept it, whatever it was, like most groceries were on shelves, anything, canned or packaged goods - if you wanted fifty-cents worth of dried beans, they had those in bins and they would take a paper sack and scales and weigh out how many - everything was just that way. There was no cafeteria to it. After that they reduced prices and then there was the cafeteria so the customer could go around and get what he wanted. That was the first job that I printed, they were cut out of newspaper [newsprint] and they were about three inches wide and about six or seven inches long and there were three, lined up three when I printed them. And they were flimsy, and I had newspaper all over the floor and had got down crooked, and everything, and Papa never said - he knew what I was going through. Well, when I went to work every morning, I had to break myself in over again. 'Cause the old, big press didn't run very fast, but I would - had this piece of paper - it was about, oh about fifteen inches long - I would get one in my hand and head for the press - by the time I got it there, the press was gone - it had already closed up - I hadn't got the rhythm. After I got the rhythm, if the press was running slow, I would feed 'em in slow - running fast, I fed 'em fast - just natural, learning to feed press. When I got so he didn't need me anymore for a few days, I was always on call. Being that I was the son, maybe I'd work today, maybe I wouldn't work tomorrow. He paid me. He was getting a dollar a thousand, he'd charge to the customer. Thousand impressions. And so we had come out and had bought this place, [on Occidental Road] and they wanted a thousand dollars down. The place was twenty-five hundred, and they wanted a thousand dollars deposit, so he advanced that to me, and I would pay it out later. So when I went to work, he said, "Well, what I'll do, I charge a dollar every thousand impressions." So he said, "what we'll do, I'll give you fifty cents of that, and we'll take a half of that and apply it to the thousand dollars."

So if today I went down and say I made five thousand, well I got two dollars and a half, and half of that - we'd put that on the wall, there, half of that onto the bill. I got so I had several hundred dollars in the bank, I didn't spend it, just went to the show, something like that. And so, then, the last year we were in the shop, Charley Meyers, he had started his business in our shop, hot machine in the corner. and he cut a hole through the wall in back of the barber shop, they cut a whole stair at a place and he finally got some equipment and put it back there - when he wanted to do something, he'd use Papa's equipment, two dollars a day, for using the type. So about the last year, at Christmas, I had saved up and I had several hundred dollars, so I wrote out a check for Papa for five hundred dollars on the bill I owed him. That didn't leave very much over, 'cause I'd been paying on it, off and on for two or three years, you know. So I wrote him a hundred and twenty-five dollars, that was after we were married, see, [after August 4, 1926] still after the five hundred I owed him a hundred and twenty-five. So, by that time he'd sold out to Jack Cleke - you remember the Cleke boys - three or four of 'em. Anyway, he'd sold out to Jack Cleke, and he went to work, not steady, but he went to work for Charley, pretty steady, not twelve months out of the year. And he was - what he wanted to do, his health was going bad - diabetes - what he wanted to do was go in to the chickens and make enough to live on. Well, he built the chicken house



down in the flat and got a bunch of chickens going and he sold the shop for - I think it was about four thousand, and he took about eighteen hundred of that and bought the mountain ranch as a - when he got to feeling bad he could go up there and relax, you know, take it easy. So we did that, and then Charley Brooks went up one year with him, and different friends went with him that he liked and Frank Fellers and Mildred went around, they stopped a year or so, stayed with us [at the ranch] so by that time he was clear out of printing and he worked altogether, when he worked, for Charley Meyers - Art Point -

So that was along in the twenties, and we was up on North Main street then. Charley had his big - business had grown the last three or four years, and he - they had three shifts printing - three shifts a day to get the orders out, and twenty-four hours a day. Papa went home one night - it was hot - and the doctor had told him, he said, "Now, when you take your insulin, don't work afterwards for an hour or so." Well, Charles wasn't home, he was in the service I guess, at that time [in 1929 Charles was eighteen] and it was a hot spell come along and Papa he - the garden needed hoeing or he thought it did, so he went down to do some work and he got a sweat up and he came home up to the house and - Joy was picking apples, she was living out in the little green house, and this was after supper and he was holding Bill [Joy's oldest child], and all three kids was there, they all idolized him - and he was, Bill was setting there in his lap and he just died like that, see. Just that way, heart attack and you know, Bill has mentioned it after that, about Papa dying when he was sitting in his lap. He remembers it.

Anyway, then 'course I was in the shop, I was on my own, cause I'd always depended on Papa, when I wanted anything, all I had to do was go and ask him, see, worked in the same shop. Well, that was gone, and I was lost, naturally would be, 'cause, Papa - you couldn't have asked him anything he couldn't give you good answers to, and I didn't have the ingenuity that I had later, and so, finally - Charley used to go to Papa whenever he had any creative work. He'd always get the idea, but he'd bring it to Papa and Papa would put the stuff in print so that it was concrete. And so he used to come to me. Well, I got to thinking, "Well, I wonder how Charley wants this?" I wasn't getting anyplace. 'Cause Charley didn't know what he wanted, you know. He'd have the idea, but he didn't know. So I said to myself one day, "Now look here." I used to get some splitting headaches. "Now look here, I don't know what he wants, Charley doesn't know what he wants, so I've got to make up my mind to set the job the way I think it wants to be, and if he don't like it, he can change it."

Well, I commenced to progress. And he'd come back with a job, "Well, you want to work a couple of hours afterwards, after 5:00 o'clock?" So he'd have this idea and he'd bring it back to me. So we commenced to progress then and oh, before we got through, after a few years, I was making practically all the decisions for him, what he wanted.

**Tell us more about your printing experiences.**

Yes, we worked over into a lot of county printing. They had Healdsburg Tribune, Petaluma paper and the Sonoma paper. They formed a ring. When it come time for the county printing this year, this fellow would have a little lower bid, so he got the printing, they all knew what the other



precinct and it was shy forty or fifty names. Well, we printed those up just like a new job and then they were fastened on to this precinct. An addenda, I think it's called. So I did that and I was up there eleven days. I stayed in Dad Snyder's old hotel. I stayed there with a meal for ten dollars a week, dollar and a half a day.

**How much were you paid?**

Dollar-ten, dollar-eleven an hour. I was making good wages compared to what I was doing otherwise. Anyway I stayed there until we got through. That was in April or May and I came home at night and your mother - she was afraid somebody was going to steal her - she would go into the bedroom at nighttime and lock the door, prop it shut so nobody could get in. So I came home at night about eleven o'clock, and it had been raining - we didn't have the porch on then - and I got to hammering on the front door, you know - woke her up - she thought that burglars were coming. Anyway, I said to her - well I had a hundred and some dollars, a lot of money in those days all at once, so we decided to go take a vacation and go up to Clear Lake four or five days, catfishing. So we did that. Ernie was about four years old. [1931]

#### **HOME ON OCCIDENTAL ROAD**

**Your purchased the land here when you were eighteen?**

Lawrence Meyers, father of Bill Meyers, had this place. Mrs. Meyers, that was Bill's wife. When he died, she had this place for years. Doc Mathers was the veterinarian. He lived down over the hill, under the Walker - house somehow he - I don't remember now - he was the one that was tearing down the old Walker barn and out-buildings on Petaluma Avenue and was selling timber. And so we had bought the place then, this place here and the idea was eventually - when we got married we would have a home - get a home started - and so we had the little Republic truck and I went down and they had the lumber which was the first sawed lumber in Sonoma County - was sawed around toward Bodega town, in there somewhere - and I bought this big pile of timbers, all different kinds for \$125 and it was oh, up to 20 - 22 feet some of it - it was long, that's the way they used to 'course now days they'd chop it any length they'd want but those days it was just rough lumber but all good sound lumber no number two's - all first grade redwood.

**This house was built from the first cut lumber in Sonoma County.**

As much as we could, yes. See there was foundation, floor joists, everything was furnished up to the flooring, course it was laid later and it was sized, like it is now. And everything that could be used was used out of that old lumber.

**So, in effect, this is the old Walker House.**

Part of it, yes. Well, until Bob [Mitchell] here about 10 - 12 years ago when he remodeled it and put new underpinnings. He took out all that old stuff that was bad and put in new stuff, leveled it up. See before, this house was just built on mud sills, laid and then your underpinnings, so a lot of that lumber that hit the ground was termites and stuff like that - needed to be changed. So then we took and put big concrete piers. Dug down about two feet down to the clay and filled that full of cement and then put the piers for the house on top of the cement so there's no danger of termite, gophers or moles working under there loosening up the piers. So that was all fixed that way, and he put on a new roof, all new underpinnings, spent altogether about three thousand. That time was



inflation and your interest rates were about 14 or 15 percent so your mother and I knew that the house needed work on it, we said, well, now is the time to do it. Cause we were getting about seven hundred a month interest. Although it cost a couple of thousand to fix it up, in about three months it paid for itself. Three thousand - first was the roof, that was fifteen-hundred, then he put in all new windows on the living room, all aluminum and then he worked the last on the underpinnings. Three years, about three thousand dollars.

**What color was the house when you first built it?**

Oh, just boards - it's always been painted white.

When we was hauling lumber from the old Walker place in town the lumber was loaded on this Republic truck and 'course it stuck way out on both sides, front and back, back in those days they didn't pay any attention to that. Down in the piles of lumber there was a child's pot. White pot. So when I hauled it home up to here I took and hung that pot on a stake, body stake, up through town. Everybody saw that, they got a big kick out of that.

**What was the population of Sebastopol then?**

About two thousand

**Were the streets paved?**

By that time they were paved. See that was in the late twenties. I don't remember just what year they were paved. See, they first tarred all the streets and that's before they had paving and so when they tarred the streets to cut down the dust naturally some of it ran down the lagoon - the sewer - and it put a film on the top of the water there and there was just thousands of all kinds of fish suffocated. and farmers went down there with the wagons and hauled this dead fish off by the wagon load for fertilizer.

**Tell us about Sebastopol's Chinatown.**

It was all in the eastern part of town and the I forgot the name of the streets. You know where Petaluma Avenue comes in by the new park, the county park, across from the store that you go to.

**The new town square.**

That street that comes through there was the last street of Chinatown. All the way across. Chinatown went clear down through all that section of Sebastopol. The streets were Brown and Snow, south to the intersection of Santa Rosa Avenue, and east a couple of blocks.

**Down to the lagoon?**

No. there was a Sebastopol Berry Grower's building down there, 'course it's been built up since then, but that whole section of town that was built up was all Chinatown. There was two or three rows of houses going east, and we used to always go down there after the show, with friends - whoever happened to be with us - and have a chow mein or a noodle or whatever it was. It was - they were all friendly, the Chinese. And you'd go in there, - the police didn't bother 'em, - and you could see these little old fellows sitting up on a bunk smokin' a long pipe. Opium. Puffin' away, just like they was about half asleep. Nobody ever molested 'em. - the white people never thought about it, either. So then they had one Chinese fellows, one of the last ones, that was big and fat - and he got a notice to go to the draft.

**So he was a citizen.**

Oh, I guess so. Anyway, he said, next time I saw him, I said, "Oh, I thought you was going to be in the service?" He said, "No, no," man



said, "too fat, China boy go home."

**Were there other businesses? How did the Chinese make a living?**  
Who knows? Chinese were always great for gambling. And they always had lotteries. You could go down - Nat Sereghino used to go down - put a dollar or two for lottery tickets, and all these tickets had places to mark, and then you'd mark it what you did and pay your dollar. Then if so many of these lottery numbers came up you got so much, and if more of 'em came up you got more. They never bothered, they didn't hurt anybody, it was just their way of living. In the summertime they all of 'em run these apple driers. 'Cause they would, oh, they had a drier over here, driers in pretty near all of these big ranches - had their own driers - and when they were harvesting the apples they didn't have time to run their driers, so these Chinamen were contracted, so much a ton, I don't know - the ranchers leased 'em out to the Chinese to dry the apples soon as the crop was done - then, they totaled 'em up and went back to Chinatown. The only building I ever went into was the one when we went to get a chow mein or noodles. It was just an ordinary building, in the back they had a room where they cooked the stuff, and it was just plain tables and chairs, nothing fancy.

**I remember.**

You used to go there?

**You used to take me, after the movie on Wednesday night. The owner tried to teach me how to use chopsticks, but I could never learn.**

**What happened to Chinatown?**

Well, I think it was just like in Santa Rosa, lack of Chinese, they just died off. There was several reasons. One reason, the Japanese moved in.

**What did the Japanese have to do with it?**

They took away the driers from the Chinese. Used to be lots of Japanese come in, and during the war, this whole country was full of Japanese, and then when they sent 'em to internment camps, they loaded 'em all on the train, and some went back east, some went north and different places, they spread 'em all over. They took the property away from 'em. That was Roosevelt's doing, cause they was - the reason was - after the attack on Pearl Harbor, you didn't know if they were loyal or not - but you see at that time, whenever a Japanese died, they always sent em back to the old country to be buried. So they thought of course that they was - you couldn't tell by looking at a Japanese whether he was loyal or not, so they treated 'em all the same, sent 'em all to internment.

**Then did the Chinese still run the dryers during the war?**

Well, about that time, the driers, some of 'em had consolidated, see. Instead of having a drier here and a drier there, there'd be maybe one drier that handled all the fruits from all over the whole area. And naturally, there wouldn't be any fruit for aliens. They were all classed as aliens, Chinese - see they come over the time the railroads were built, and then there was agitation against them then, and it just kept festering for years. Course that was back before my time but then I know the situation. The war brought it to a head - cause they were aliens, they couldn't be naturalized.

**They couldn't become citizens?**

No, according to agitation, they made these laws in Sacramento that they couldn't hold property.

**Chinatown just sort of died out.**

Yes, its day was past. You see, the Japanese, when they were sent away



during the war, they couldn't be American citizens, so here just a few years ago there was a agitation, the ones that were young at the time of the war now were old, several thousand of 'em, and they agitated to get compensation for what happened to 'em during the war. That's why these little - like Chinatown - died out, there was no reason for 'em to keep a'going, there was nothing for 'em to do - died off - couldn't become citizens like they do now.

**Was there a rich and a poor side of town?**

Not too much in a small town, no. Chinatown, that's all.

**Rich people didn't live up on the hill, and so forth?**

Oh, some, yeah, that's right. Up on Calder, that was rich man's - compared to them. Up in that section of town. There was no differential in school classes.

**What was it like when you took Mom to meet your family?**

Well, I don't know, there was nothing special. She'd came in to work in the shop, that's how I met her. And then I asked her for a date, followed her down the street and asked her for a date. Char never got over that. I said, "Oh, I used to be awful bashful." She said, "Yes! Bashful! Follow a girl down the street and didn't know her name." Anyway, I fell for her, see, I liked brunettes, she had dark hair - so when I asked her, she was bashful and didn't have courage enough to say "I have to ask my folks," she said, "Well, alright." and then I said, "Well, where do you live?" She told me. So that's all I knew about her, I didn't know her name. So then that night I went out to pick her up. If I'd a got in the wrong house, well, I wouldn't have known who to ask for. But there was only two houses there, three houses, and theirs was the second house, so I drove in, you know, and I tapped on the back door, of course she came to the door, and I recognized her, and she introduced me to her folks and we went to the show, California or Roxy - there was two big show houses on a side street and they had vaudeville, a pretty nice place. So we went in and of course you always had to buy some kind of a - usually popcorn, that was ten cents, that was about all the money I had, so we went in and had the show, vaudeville on Saturday, always had vaudeville, and the show, [movie] of course we didn't know what it was about. It was called *Three Weeks*. There were always two movies, and they would play the main movie first and then intermission with the vaudeville, then they'd play the second feature. It was a sexy show, and it didn't - this and that stuff - I was bashful and she was bashful and it didn't bother us. So that was Saturday night. I got so I stayed out there pretty near every Saturday night. When we got home, by the time we sat around the kitchen and were spooning, it was late getting home and foggy, so I got so I hardly every went home on Saturday night.

**Tell us about vaudeville**

Well, there was usually about six or eight acts, and they had different circuits, Orpheum circuit - two or three different circuits that the entertainers would sign up for and then they had the show houses - today maybe Santa Rosa, maybe next week would be Petaluma. They had some pretty good acts on Saturday evenings. Two or three people would have a little band and they would perform and the next act would be different. They had variety. There was jugglers, and comedians and stuff like that. They always tried to have a pretty good balanced program every week.

**Where did you sleep when you spent the night at Mom's folks'?**

I don't remember. They had a living room, front room and I don't



remember just where I slept, to tell the truth. Didn't make much difference. I forgot what time of the year that was. It was right after high school, and she worked until the fall, Christmas rush, and see we went together - well she graduated in '24 cause then we were married in '26.[Nettie May Head was born April 11, 1906.] They had fixed up Grandma's old house out there in the back for us to live in and we came back from the trip - August - we went up to the ranch so then when the winter came - Nettie's Dad, he had nothing to do, so he was pretty good with tools, pretty thorough, we built the house. That was the winter of '27. [Early in 1927]

We had the little cottage out there, Papa and I had it, with a little stove, so when we used to work over here, he always liked to take a nap after lunch, and we had a cot in there, and the stove, we'd come up and eat lunch when we were working, and he would lay down for about an hour. He always liked that, lay down and relax. So then I would go out and work on the orchard. They were a funny kind of apple that wasn't worth anything, so we cut 'em all off and put in Gravensteins

**What kind of apple was it?**

I don't know. Bennett over here was the main nurseryman, and he had a big run on Gravensteins and he ran short so he - someway in Oregon he got ahold of some nurseryman that had a lot of trees so they ordered - I don't know how many hundreds he ordered, and they was supposed to be Gravs - well they wasn't. This little tree right here at the corner of the garage, that's one of 'em. That was a seedling. When they were grafted - I don't know what kind of a tree they were grafted into, beautiful big apples, long stemmed and when the apples got ready to pick, the meat just disintegrated and they were rotten. You could take and throw em on the ground and they'd just splatter, like mush. So we grafted all those into Gravenstein.

**That was a lot of work, how many trees did you have?**

Well there wasn't so awful many, because they were about thirty-two feet apart and I don't know if we ever counted them. We had at least a couple hundred anyway. Then in a few years they commenced to bear and we had beautiful big Gravensteins. and it went on and on, then. 'Course then we'd built the house and moved in and Ernie was born - he was born out there on the back porch. [Where the washing machine is now] That used to be a back porch. When you and Mama [Nettie] came back from Humboldt, Carl [Joy's husband, Carl Nielsen] came over and built on a bathroom and a service porch, and closed about where my room - that was your room. [Nancy's].

**I remember the bathroom wasn't finished until after the war.**

That was Carl put that on when he remodeled the house. Before that we had an outhouse.

**We used to keep milk on the back porch in big basins on trestle tables.**

After that, we put the milk over there under the big tree [A box was nailed to a big pine tree. A gunny sack was nailed to the top of the box, and on that was placed a block of ice. As the ice melted, the cold water ran down over the sack, keeping the milk cool]

**We started earlier to talk about your courtship. What happened when Nettie met your mother and so on. She already knew your father from working in the print shop.**

Well, course, your mother, she went to church pretty near every Sunday,



went over one day with the trailer and he cut down a fir tree on his place, slid it down the hill - I can show you the road, he had a little saw mill - and so we drug it down and he sawed it up so that I could haul it home. Used it to build the water tower.

**During the Depression, where did you get your food?**

Oh, I got enough work around to buy food and Patchy [Nettie's father, Clarence Head] worked driving feed truck so about once every two or three weeks he'd stop on the way home with a box of groceries - keep us going.

**What about Patchy?**

We got along fine together. He thought a lot of me and I thought a lot of him. I was close to both of 'em, not as much to her as to him. Then when he died, that's when she went - when she changed. [Speaking here of Lena May Bruce Head, Nettie's mother.]

**How did she change?**

Well, she told Ida May [Nettie's niece on her mother's side] she was going to leave all her property to her and then your mother said, to Ida May, "She don't have any property." And Ida May was - she was thunderstruck, because she had been looking, I don't know how much your grandmother had told her, but she was looking to have a lot of money turned over to her, and when Patchy died and they had services in Santa Rosa, at the - I forgot, up on upper Fourth Street - she wanted Ida May to sit next to her, she didn't want your mother, that's when she was very close with Ida May - see she went down there, they lived in Southern California and she went down there - and she lied about me and everything was a lie and she had them come up to live with her on Morgan Street, and she said she wanted them to come in and live with her - Fred [Granny's brother] and Ida May [Fred's daughter] and Wilton [Ida May's husband] So then, one day, they came home and she kicked them out. So the first thing they did was head for here, see, they didn't know what to do. And your mother said, "You'd better get out." She said, "If you don't go, she'll get the sheriff, kick you out."

**She lived in a house back behind this house, I remember.**

Well, this all happened after her house was moved over. Well, right after Patchy died, she moved her house back here onto the back of this place. Yeah, she was going to live here and she was going through everything - and making life miserable for Ernie, cause he was older, and we had to - I had to get after her to quit picking on Ernie, she was putting all of her troubles on his shoulders.

**He couldn't have been more than nine years old. Patchy died three weeks after I was born in 1935.**

He wasn't very old, and she would get him on the back porch, and she would get him up close and then she'd commence to - she wanted him to say things that wasn't true about me. I don't know what. Anyway, one thing led to another.

**How did you know that?**

Well, your mother was suspicioning what was happening, so she had to do a little working on Ernie to get him to tell her what Granny had said or done. In order for protection. It was pretty hard to get around with all living on one - in a small house. She was in and out. We'd given her some things to live with, and when we were gone one day, she had the movers come over and move her furniture, she had this house on - between that Santa Rosa-Petaluma main road - on Spring Street. This was a short street between South Santa Rosa and Sonoma Avenue. She took the house



in these windows, Harold Hodapp, moved the kitchen stove over there, put the table here.

Then Mom cut the hole in the wall between the kitchen and living room in '52 or '53 and you had to finish it off.

Right.

What did you use for heating?

We burnt coal mostly It was a circulating heater - went up pretty high - and we bought several sacks of coal.

I remember the coal out in the storage shed, what's now the lower level of the cottage.

Then when Ida May and Wilton, after Granny kicked them out they went and bought this little piece of property down below Santa Rosa and they built this little house and we gave Ida May the stove.

Is that when you got the cast iron stove, the one that finally went out to the shop?

Yes, and about that time we run the line down for natural gas. Oh, that was just a wood heater. It stored out there after we got the gas hooked up. Ellis [Alderson] came over with his tractor and we plowed the ditch up to the house, down in there in the swale and he cleaned it out and put the natural gas in.

When did you get the furnace?

Gene Welch - his dad was a carpenter and he helped his dad work after school and on weekends. So he came and dug the pit for the furnace, then his dad come out and lined it up with wood so we could pour the concrete. Just after the war because we had Duke Borba - he was working for a company in Santa Rosa and he could still get metal - to fix it underneath. That was right at the last of the war - 44-45. Ernie came home from the Navy and I had a wisdom tooth pulled out from a fellow in Forestville, a dentist, and it swelled up and was sore and while they were gone this fellow name of Howie that brought him [Ernie] home, they went up in the Sierras for a trip and we turned this heat on while they were gone. I stayed in there with your mother on her bed and my jaw was all swelled up and the heat - we kept the house warm during the nighttime. [Before that they had had a problem with mildew in the closets, since the only heat was in the living room or kitchen.]

When did you get the telephone put in?

Ernie was about maybe two years old - he was born in '27 - about 1930. When they hooked it up, they hooked it up on a Saturday and they didn't put a meter box in in order so we could use it. They just took the wires and wrapped them together. Six months after that, PG&E [Pacific Gas and Electric] drove in. They said, "We're looking for your PG&E box." We said, "We don't have a box." "You don't have a box!" "No," we said, "no, they put it in on a Saturday and they didn't have a box so they just twisted the wires together so we could use it." And they said, "You haven't been using it, have you?" We said, "Sure, been about six months ago." And I think the next day they had a meter in. I said, "Sure, they said they'd be back and they never did." Back in those days maybe three or four dollars a month was all it cost you. Fellow just shook his head. It was a hand crank telephone.

I remember our number was two long and one short, and it was on the back porch on the wall where the green cabinet is now.



## THE WAR YEARS

We were talking about the time you took the orchard out during the war.

Well, we hadn't gotten into the war yet, but it looked like we couldn't stay out, and I told my wife, Nettie - we had the two children coming on - and it looked to me like our biggest problem would be food. I was working in the shop and we didn't need the orchard for income. So we went to work taking the trees out, and wasn't long after that we were in the war and everything was rationed. During those years we had a cow, we raised a steer a year and one pig, and we had a locker at the cold storage plant. Arnett, there on west Main Street, had a butcher shop, and he didn't care if you had food stamps [ration stamps] or not, so we got lamb from him.

**On the black market?**

Well, I guess so, yeah. Anyway, we didn't use hardly any food stamps, all the relatives were wanting us to give 'em food stamps. We handed 'em out there and the war didn't bother us one bit.

**What kind of cows did you have?**

Jersey, good big Jersey. One of 'em we had pictures of - one staked out there - and she give about four gallons a day. Oh she had a bag on her. She was one of the breed up in Forestville. You go out towards Forestville and Mirabel and go out to the end of the road, cuts off to the left.

**Any other farm animals?**

No, we used to have the horse, Bill, when we first started. Yeah, when we had the cow we had pigs over there, built up [in a pigpen on the south side of the barn] and a fellow came from Forestville to butcher 'em and to butcher the calves, too. He was good. Never had many chickens. [Nancy remembers lots of chickens since she had to gather the eggs] Ernie brought home some duck eggs - over there, he was great friends with the youngest - went to the same grade of school - and his mother had a lot of fancy ducks. Well, he was givin' Ernie all the eggs and your mother went over to Oak Grove PTA and she walked home with Mrs. - Barlow, she was a Barlow girl before she was married - she said "I don't know what's happened to all of my duck eggs this year, they just keep disappearing. Well your mother never said a word. We had em out here, we had some of the funniest lookin' ducks. Just all odd shapes and this and that, you know. She never told her what happened to 'em. Ernie was bringing 'em home. We set 'em under Banties or something like that.

**How did you meet Jim Peak and Max Fuller?**

Back in those days service men on the road, all they had to do was stick their thumb up and they'd get a ride, because everybody would pick them up. So I used to work till Saturday noon, and on the way home, this young service kid wanted a ride, so I picked him up and brought him home. He was stationed at Hamilton Field or Treasure Island [he was in the Navy] and there was nothing to do on the long weekend and he'd heard about Russian River and he was going to go up and see what it was. So we asked him if he wanted to stop for dinner, so he stopped. I was going to go fishing up on Mt. Jackson, so we got over around Hacienda and I let him out and told him where I was going and told him, "You won't find much there this time of year, and if you don't want to stay you're welcome to come and stay overnight." Well, the next morning your mother went out to the cottage for something and the door was locked. "Gee, that's funny," she thought, "we never lock the door," and she said,



"Who's in there?" and Jim says, "It's me, I came back last night." So he spent the rest of the day and we took him to Santa Rosa and he got a ride back to his base. We invited him back, and the next long weekend he had he came up and brought Max with him. They had went to school right close together there in Iowa and they used to - Jim was great for baseball and Max liked baseball, too - well, they played against each other in school, so he brought Max up.

Then Freeman Atkinson, he was from Virginia. He was very religious, he might have come to church, I don't remember just how we met him. He was stationed out here, at this airport, [where Santa Rosa Airport is now] and he came out one night and he was just all nervous, all shook up. He'd been loading - this was an airport to train bombers - and they were loading a bomb on this airplane, and it got loose and fell, and he was a disposition that it just got him - it could have gone up - I guess it was a live bomb. Anyway, they were those B - pursuit - had two engines and two bodies and the pilot set between the two of them - Pursuit 30-something. It seems to me that Mom [Nettie] wrote a letter to his mother in Virginia, right close to Washington D.C., telling 'em their son was okay and this and that, and we got acquainted with 'em and he used to come up and see us.

**What happened when Ernie joined the Navy?**

Well, I don't know just exactly what happened. He joined the - oh the hospital - I don't remember what happened after he left here.

**How did it affect you and Mom? Were you worried he might get in the war?**

Oh, it didn't affect us any. We were just in it, that's all. Nell - we got so disgusted with her. Leroy [Nell's son] called up, I forget where he was at, this was at Christmas and she [he makes moaning noises like someone in pain] and your mother, she didn't like that, so you couldn't a got her to express her opinion that way, you know. He [Ernie] was in Long Beach at the hospital down there, and he was in about a year and a half. He was just out of high school.

**Do you remember where you were when the war ended?**

I wasn't anyplace particular when the Japanese surrendered. That didn't affect us.

I remember you coming home, and you asked, "Aren't you listening to the radio? Mom was ironing, I was sitting at the kitchen table, and you said, "Turn the radio on, the war's over!" You were very excited.

I don't remember.

**Do you remember about Pearl Harbor?**

That Sunday, Walt Edebetel and me, we went over to the bay to dig clams, and on the way home, at the south end of Bodega, the road was blocked. We had to come back over the hill road. [Bay Hill Road] And that was the day that Walt's stepdaughter was killed in an auto accident down between there and the bay.

**After the war you fixed the bathroom and got the refrigerator. It was the first refrigerator sold in Sonoma County after the war.**

That's right. Starr's [furniture store] had the agency, and they had put our name down. Ray [Starr] came out to put these Venetian blinds in the corner for my birthday and I guess they got to talking, your mother and him, she told him that we would like a refrigerator. So after the war was over Ray called up the house and said "I've got your refrigerator



here." She said, "Refrigerator? We didn't order any refrigerator." He said, "Well, yes, when I came out and fixed those Venetian blinds, you were talking about wanting a refrigerator." He put our name, happened to be the first on the list. He said, "If you don't want it, that's okay." He had over a hundred on the list. She called up the shop and told me and I said, "Sure." It was a hundred and eighty some dollars. So we got the refrigerator. So five or six, maybe seven years ago [that first refrigerator lasted from 1945 until 1988] it got so it didn't work too good, so we went down to Griff's, down below town by the Japanese church and ordered - this is a Gibson - Gibson company - it makes Tappan. Ever since then I keep the - [warranty] in case anything goes wrong, they'll fix it. So if anything goes wrong all I've got to do is take this down to Griff's and show it and that's it. 'course, you never know, the way things are now, if anything goes wrong it may take a couple hundred dollars to fix it. This way it don't cost anything, just what you've paid for.

#### TRAVELS AND RETIREMENT

##### What happened when you retired?

The union had been settled. We were down in the new shop on Petaluma Avenue. I just about went crazy down there because there was absolutely no light. Everything was solid walls and everything was fluorescent. They had just went union and I didn't have any use for it, and that's what brought my heart attack on. I come home here, it was February, we had two weeks vacation. After you'd worked so many years you had four weeks. So I went out to - had my vacation. One day we'd had green onions, and that night I belched up onions - I thought I had indigestion, and I got up the next morning and pruned out there until about two o'clock and your mother said, let's go over and see Uncle Rob [Patchy's brother]. We went over there and all of a sudden I was cold and I broke in a sweat. I said to your mother, "We'd better get home, I don't feel good." So we got home and she said, "I'm going to call up Dr. Derbyshire, and tell him what's going on." So she called him up, this was on a Saturday, and he came right out. He said, "There's something worse than green onions." And so he come out and checked me over and said, "Damn it, you've had a heart attack." He said, "When did this happen?" I said, "Last night." "What'd you do today?" I said, "I pruned 'till about two o'clock." He said, "Pruned, until two o'clock! And you're still alive! I'm taking you right to the hospital." He called up the hospital and told them to reserve a bed for me and Doc said, "He's had a heart attack." And she said, "Do you want me to send out the ambulance?" And he said, "Hell no," he said, "he had it last night and he's been pruning trees all day and he's still alive, one more trip isn't going to hurt him." So that's what happened with my heart attack. I was there eighteen days and then I came home. I had to take it easy. And I still never got over it. When you have a heart attack it does something. I got along alright, but now today, that pooped me, walking out there.

##### You hadn't quit work yet when you had your heart attack.

No I wouldn't have quit till August, of that year. I was sixty-five, August the 29th. [1968] I had a lot of accumulated money coming from sick leave and this and that and then I had some from the year before so altogether I forgot how many hundred dollars I had now. So I said,



well - there was a girl was going to take my place - Joyce, and she was working there - I told Bill Goss, talked with him. "How financially will I come out if I quit a couple of weeks early." And we figured it out, it wasn't hardly anything, so I quit two weeks earlier, instead of the twenty-ninth, it was about the fifteenth of August.

**What about the problem you had with the union?**

Johnny Williams - he wouldn't have anything to do with the back shop. He just quit. We had no communication with Johnny for months. The only thing we had communications with was Bill Goss, he was the shop foreman. The back shop was the composer's union. [Lowell was a member of the union, and Johnny was management] He knew that I wasn't in favor of the union, but I was treated the same as the other members because I'd went - they'd went over to the union. He just quit like that. That hurt me, you know, I'd worked there for fifty years and he knew that I was loyal - to cut that out -

**He cut your friendship?**

Well, inside he didn't, but on the outside he did. Because I was a member of the union. I had that rejection. So he come along one day before I retired and I was head proofreader. They'd had a couple of fellows reading proof and a lot of mistakes came back. Why, I don't know. Aggy Aguire was my press feeder in the old shop and we'd go along for weeks at a time and not have one mistake come back. Well you take and have mistakes come back, they had to reset - by that time they had either a Linotype or photoset - and if a job come back, that job had to go through the whole process again. And see if it was a deadhead - we'll say the job was worth fifty dollars when it first came. Well if it came back a mistake, you lost your fifty dollars besides what it cost to run it again, see. So they had a lot of come-backs - mistakes. So then one day I was on something else, Bill come back - he didn't say why but I knew why. He said "Would you care if we put you up proofreading?" I said, "Bill, I don't care what I do. Whatever's best for the shop." so they put me up reading proof. At the new shop they put in Linotype so there's no handset, and we'd take a copy of it, and your proofreader would read off of that to the copy. Well we went along for weeks after that and no jobs come back. so the day I retired Johnny had Bill come out and say, "After work, Johnny would like to see you. in his office." So I hung around the restroom for a few minutes till all of the rest of them had left and I went back in to see Johnny. And we got to talking and I told him - I don't know if he wanted me to keep on working or - he'd told me earlier - he'd come along one day when he wasn't speaking to any of us - and he come along through the shop and he sidled up behind me and he said, all he said was, "You don't have to retire, you can keep on working if you want." And he was gone. So that's why he wanted me to come in and say goodbye, he didn't want no hard feelings. I had told him, I'd already retired, see, I said "Well, Johnny," I said, "I'll tell you," I said, "I wasn't raised under these conditions." I said, "Whenever I got a raise in pay I tried to work a little harder to earn it." He knew all that, he had nothing against me and so I said, "Since we went union," I said, "We're trying to cut your throat and you're trying to cut our throats." I said, "I wasn't raised under those conditions and I don't like it," and I said, "I've had all I can take." That's exactly the words I said, see. We parted good friends because he knew that I was right, see.

**What did you have against unions?**



Well, you know, in those days we believed what we read, what we were told, [middle 1960's], we didn't have like we do today, with newspapers with editorials and like that. We'd heard about how the automobile workers would make up a whole bunch more cars than they could sell, then they'd go on strike, and management would end up giving them a big raise and we'd all end up paying for it. There was no foreign competition to keep the prices down. Then there was the attitude of the younger workers in the shop. They didn't care about the shop, but only how much money they could make. Because of that attitude the shop failed later on. Then, too, I just wasn't used to 'em [unions] and I'd worked at the plant almost forty-five years and I had to change all around or I got bawled out for it. One time I got called on the carpet for wishing a good vacation to a woman I'd worked for for years. Just because she was in a different union. We wasn't supposed to have any contact with members of other unions.

I don't think I've seen Johnny - yes I did too, one time, when Scott came down - this was after I quit, so we called up Johnny and I told him [Scott wanted to see the plant]. "Sure" he said - that was on a Labor Day weekend. He said, "Come down to the house in the morning." He lived down south of town. We went down and he said, - by that time he had sold out and he was running the shop for the competitors that bought it and Johnny Schaeffer was the foreman - he said "I'll tell Johnny that when you come in, stop everything and let you take as long as you want to go through the shop." Scott was in his teens. He was working for some plant in Portland, nothing permanent. So we did that and Johnny took us all through the shop and Thelma [Bill Nielsen's wife] was still working there. She was kind of shop lady foreman for the compositor. She was good at that. So we was in there about three quarters of an hour. Johnny Schaeffer took us through and we had a nice time.

**Tell us about Johnny Schaeffer and Ramona.**

He came in the shop to go to work and he was just out of high school and he wound up feeding press for me, and about that time he got a case on her, it was during the polio epidemic. [Ramona later contracted polio] Ramona [Schulz] was very popular with the boys. Every night there was about a half a dozen boys courting her and Johnny always stayed till the last one. Well, he didn't get much sleep and he'd come to work the next morning just dead on his feet. And so when he fed press, when he got through with a job there was a stool behind him, put there to rest. When a comp changed forms there was always lost motion and the pressman or the comp, whichever one, had lost motion, could sit down on those stools and relax. Johnny would feed the job that he had and when he took it over to the duster and got back, he was asleep. When he got through if I had my next job set I would take the form out of the press and put the new one in. By that time Johnny would be asleep on this stool. So I'd put the form in the press and say, "John, wake up!" He'd get up and then he'd pull a proof and read whatever the job was and then when he got through, the whole thing over again. When he got through with the job, [he'd give it to] the duster, she sat about ten feet away, and Johnny came back and by the time he got back to that stool, he was out. He could just go to sleep like that. Anyway, he finally outstayed all the fellows and they got married.

**You and Mom traveled on the train a couple of times.**

When we went to - north - when Ernie was in The Dalles, when he was



district ranger at the Gorge and we went on the train in February and 'course we were on all night and we got in Portland about 8 o'clock next morning and we had lamb chops for dinner. Oh boy, they were good! I think they were three or five dollars a plate, lots of money back then. So then I think we had 'em when we came home. We came home in the day time. And we left the car there [at their friend's the Burgesses] when we went and we picked it up on the way home - and then when we went to Tennessee we didn't have anything to eat.

**You went on the train to Tennessee?**

No we went on the airplane, that's right. All they had was doughnuts and I couldn't eat 'em because I was on a diet. We had a cup of coffee and doughnuts. That was on the way to Dallas. Then we changed planes, flew into - where they have the Old Age Opera - Nashville - 'cause you see, those airstrips back there weren't made for jets, not the big jumbo jets, so from Dallas we flew on a prop plane to Nashville on the way home, because they didn't take as much room to take off and land as your jets. 'Course now it's the other way around. So then the second trip we came down there and you was in Murfreesboro. We came home in the daytime, and it was really beautiful flying over the Rockies - look down and you'd see a spot of aspen, yellow aspen - of course the ground, you know how the ground looks from so high, and then you'd see a little lake and the river, and along the rivers was green fields, not too many of them. And we got home in San Francisco in the middle of the afternoon. Burgesses came down and met us.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

**What was your favorite radio show?**

Amos and Andy. Always Amos and Andy. There was a lot of different - 'course Amos and Andy weren't on too many years after we was married.

**Do you remember the first movie you saw?**

No, 'course they were all silent. Buster Keaton, Charley Chaplin, we saw all those, but it just, every week, you see. We saw The Jazz Singer.

**How important has music been in your life?**

Well, it was important. We liked it, and then it was always the bunch of young people here. When I was growing up, we didn't have much back in those days. Mama played the piano and the organ, but we didn't sing like we did when we were here.

**After you were married?**

Well, of course your mother was great on the piano, she liked that, and her dad liked piano music, and whenever we went out there, we always - first thing we did was head for the piano, and we sang a lot. Her dad, he just loved to have her sing, or have anybody sing. He just loved it. He never sang. I never heard him sing. Mostly your mother and I sang at weddings, two or three favorite songs that they always wanted - but we never sang out in public much after we were married. People would invite us to come over for supper or something and, "We'll have a good sing." - 'cause pretty near everybody - although they didn't sing, everybody liked music. Most everybody had a piano. Your mother would play the piano, usually. We sang at one of the Orchard's out on the road to Mirabel, big, two story house, some relation, and we sang two or three - I sang two or three popular songs - wedding stuff - "Take Me Home Again, Kathleen," that was popular, then several that your mother and I sang good together. Evidently our voices must have blended 'cause pretty near



everybody - we'd go and they'd always want those songs. "Let the Rest of the World Go By," "Whispering Hope," "Beautiful Dreamer." "Let the Rest of the World Go By," that was always - if we went camping and singing around the campfire, why it wasn't long till somebody wanted to sing that. I guess I must have had a good voice, 'cause everybody enjoyed it when we sang. 'Course you don't know, everybody thinks they have a good voice, but I think I had a very good voice.

**So you liked it when the Methodist Youth Fellowship group came and sang here.**

Oh, I liked it! Oh, yes. I liked it fine. Used to have the room packed here on Saturday night when they had things like that - singing - Bob Martz and Gene Welch and there was another family below town that belonged to the fellowship - Nettie was in charge of it for some years] - they all came out - came out for a big sing. Oh yes, there was always something to eat. Popcorn, hot chocolate, cookies. Oh yes.

**What was it like here before you planted trees and flowers?**

Orchard - we had cut out some trees when we built the house. They wasn't too big, and then in there where the back lawn and great big tree - right there by that building and there's another big Gravenstein here, and as the other trees started to grow they got too big and I cut them out - and right in there about where the plants are in those pots, that was an apple tree [where the fuschias are now].

**We used to hang the hammock Ernie brought from the Navy between the tree and the grapevine post.**

Never had much flowers for quite a while. because didn't have any water. Had the well but no tank or nothing - they just commenced to expand, all the flowers and the lawn and stuff. It was your mother, she was always expanding the flowers. she liked them.

**Did sit you outside much in the summertime?**

Oh yes, we were younger oh yes, sure. We used to have picnics, lots of picnics out there on that where the furnace [barbecue stove] was. Oh yeah, we used to eat out all the time. Ernie was always outside, he always wanted to eat outside. We used to eat out a lot when the weather was decent.

**Who built the barbecue?**

Well, there was Gene Welch and the boys, Ernie's friends - Bob Martz.

**Do you enjoy being by yourself?**

Oh yeah, sure. I was always alone when I was a kid. I was always - when they had the shop - when they didn't need me there I was pruning or doing something outside all the time. It didn't bother me.

**What was it like when your children finally left home? Were you glad to have the house to yourself?**

Well, we still worried about 'em. All parents are the same.

Oh, no. Oh, it was quieter, no we didn't - we would rather have had the kids home. I know they couldn't, you know.

**What are your favorite things, what makes you really happy?**

Well, to tell you the truth I never thought much about it. Favorites. It was just - accepted what it was and happy.

**Food?**

Fried chicken. We used to take, when we had chickens we raised the young ones and on a Saturday or Sunday we'd usually kill about ten or twelve roosters. They'd weigh out about a pound apiece, pound and a quarter, and have those for Sunday dinner. Nice and sweet and tender. Then corn, green beans, tapioca pudding, grapefruit, clam chowder.



**If you could choose your last supper what would it be?**

Your mother and I always said if we knew we were going to die tomorrow we're going to have a big chow mein. We always said that. I can't think of any food that tastes better than a good chow mein. for a last meal I'd take chow mein over fried chicken.

**What's your perfect breakfast?**

Well, I don't know, how you gonna - I have about the same stuff every morning. Hotcakes, eggs and bacon

**Snack?**

Couple of graham crackers

**Better than popcorn?**

No, no - popcorn.

**Do you eat better or worse now than when you were a child?**

I ate better when I was a child.

**In what way?**

Oh, I'd be hungrier...

**I don't mean appetite - I mean the food that you eat today. How would food that you had as a child?**

Well, they tasted better - hungrier. When you're hungrier things have a a better taste. Lots of times I eat now when I'm not hungry. I eat breakfast at nine, couple of cookies is all I want for dinner [lunch].

**What was the most delicious meal you've ever had?**

Chow Mein, I can't think of anything better - at Jam Key's [in Santa Rosa] I never cared for cake, per se, and if anybody fixed up a birthday luncheon and had a big cake or ice cream, a good chow mein would have been better.

**Did you ever like sweets?**

No, I was never much for sweets. Your mother hardly ever cooked a cake for me, I just didn't care for them.

**She used to bake a lot of cookies.**

Yes, mostly for Ernie. She always kept him supplied with chocolate chip cookies during the war. I ate the burnt ones - not burnt - sometimes they'd be in the oven a couple of minutes too long "Oh, I can't send those." "Leave 'em, I'll eat 'em."

**Where do you like to eat out?**

I don't eat out. Well, the only places we eat out is on a trip. The favorite here would be the place over in Bodega Bay, the Sandpiper.

**Do you buy certain brands of food?**

I like Hungry Jack hotcakes. I look at it this way, I'm ninety-one going on ninety-two, and why switch over too much?

**What game shows do you like on television?**

Well, I think my favorite is Jeopardy. You have to use your head. Now the other one, if you're lucky you win, if you're not - you don't have to use your head. Wheel of Fortune. See you just say that, if you happen to hit it you're alright. But Jeopardy - they have all these questions and if you don't answer them you're out. So you have to use your head.

**Favorite cartoon?**

Popeye, goes way back.

**Sport?**

Football.

**Any special team or sports figure?**

No, no. Oh, 'course, everybody likes to watch the Forty-Niners, that's the home team, and they - three or four Super Bowls - naturally.

Oh yes, Joe Montana - there was two or three players on the Forty-Niners



that really were good in their positions, see. And -  
Well, this thing here is every - what was your favorite. That's pretty  
near every question is what was your favorite. I didn't have much  
favorites.

We've knocked down a few already, so I guess you did have some.

What president, in your lifetime, has done the most for the  
country?

Well, right now, of course it was FDR. But at the time he was very  
unpopular. That's because of - on account of a monetary situation. See,  
we're getting a certain amount a month, and naturally that comes every  
month and according - there's no danger of it stopping. So that would  
be my favorite, not particularly political. But the president who helped  
you the most is going to be your favorite. Whenever you think about  
social security you think about FDR.

You think social security is the best thing that's happened for  
this country?

Oh, yes, now, what would I do or we do if I didn't have it? It's good  
for elderly people. For the whole country. It's helping to keep it  
stabilized, up on an even keel. You take if twelve or fifteen million  
people didn't have social security this country would be pfft.

Who was your all-time best friend?

My dad.

What modern convenience are you most glad to have?

Automobile - we got to have automobiles and electricity - they're about  
a toss-up.

Is there an item of clothing you just can't make yourself throw  
away?

No

Your old jacket?

Well, Yes.

What's the best time of day?

Well, I suppose evening. I don't get up early in the morning like I  
used to. We used to get up at 6:00 I got up at 6:30 this morning and  
went back to bed. When I was young I'd get up and plan what to do and I  
was eager to get going.

What was the best day of your life?

I don't remember the day I was born. 'Course it's one thing - you were  
waiting until you were twenty one. I remember Art Dollar. He waited  
until he was twenty-one. The morning he got up and he was twenty-one and  
he expected the whole world to change. Ruth said it - Art got up, looked  
around, "Heck, this is no different from yesterday." He expected  
because he was going to be twenty-one, things were going to be  
different.

What have you looked forward to?

Well, like the trip now, [trip to Oregon, June, 1995] I'm looking  
forward to it. I don't think - how old you get - you can still  
anticipate. When I was younger it was always vacation, went somewhere,  
deer hunting, Mendocino or Humboldt county and I always looked forward  
to it.

What about after you were married?

Not so much because I couldn't, I had restrictions. You know what I  
mean. It's different when you're married.

What kind of restrictions?



Now you're putting me back in a hole. Well, responsibility. Money's always a factor. If I had never been married and it come along time to take a vacation, I would never have thought about money. You have to stop to think, well now, if I do this, how am I going to pay these bills? It's just different, that's all. I was never unhappy about it that way, but when you talk about restrictions, yes, if you're in the right frame of mind

**Speaking of restrictions, you were diagnosed with diabetes when you were forty-nine, in 1952.**

I noticed at first when we were on vacation up at Shasta. Ernie was working there. We went up there at Barrel Springs, and I commenced to fuel up a great thirst - thirsty all the time. So we came home we made an appointment with Dr. Marsh, and went up there and his secretary gave me the necessary things and she took it in to doctor and said "Lowell's got diabetes." So he said, well, I'll have to put you on insulin. Have Nettie come in and I'll instruct her how to do it." So I come home and told her and she said, "I can't do it. Different - didn't have little needles then, had needles about that long and Papa used to lay over the foot of the bed and Mama would stick him in the hip, you know. She said, "I can't do it." So she went down to the doctor and she told him, "I just can't stick him." And he said, "Well, if you can't you can't, but he's got to have something, so I'll put him on a strict diet. So he put me on a fourteen hundred calorie diet, and I just about starved to death. It was along in the cold weather, and I got so I was just cold all the time. Come home at noon to eat and I had a three quarters of a slice of bread and so much butter, and you know - by the time I'd get through eating I'd start getting hungry. So that went along for about a month. He said, have him come in again in about a month - go up and get a urine test. So I went up to Palm Drive, got a urine test. It was back normal again. So, he said, "Your diet seems to be doing pretty good, I'll increase it to 1800 calories," and that was maybe one slice of bread - I ate mostly lamb chops and then he increased it to 2200 after awhile. So that was where I stayed until Dr. Derbyshire took over down on South Main and I commenced to get hungry again, and he said, "Well, there's nothing to worry about, your pancreas is just getting a little thinner, it's just like the hair on the top of your head, just commence to lose a few, pretty soon you got a little bald spot." The same way. So I was on that until I had the heart attack in '68 - got over that, came home and sugar stayed about the same, and then Dr. Powers came along. Derbyshire went to Napa to work with a group of doctors. Far as I know he's still over there. He was just ten years younger than me, so he would be up about 81 now. Then it got so Dr. Powers commenced to increase my Orinase [pills] and so it got so the pills, every six months he would increase the power. Pills have several different kinds, for certain kinds of diabetes. So it went about, oh, I don't remember, three, four, five years ago, he said, "Well I'm going to have to put you on insulin because we don't have any stronger pills." So that was when I started on insulin.

**How old were your father and grandfather when they died of diabetes?**

He [his father] died in 1929. When he was born we'd have to look up. My grandfather was in his fifties, I guess

**Any movie that you really liked, that you'd like to see again?**

Al Jolson, one of the first ones, when they put that on tape, Al Jolson.



*The Jazz Singer.*" Oh, of course, there was a lot of big movies; *Intolerance*, that was a big one, and *Birth of a Nation*, that was a long one, three or four hours, and I always remembered them.

**What about more modern movies?**

Well, you can't tell by listening to them on the t.v., what they are, they play 'em up so big, they do that in order to see which ones can make the most money. I liked *The Birds*, that's about the only one we've seen in twenty years.

**You said *Hallelujah Trail* was one of the funniest you'd seen.**

Yes, it didn't seem as funny as it did when it first came out.

**You said there was no particular kind of music when you were growing up. What kind of music do you like now?**

Well, I don't know if it had a name or not, we just accepted it, that was all. Tell you the truth, there isn't any of them now I really like.

**You seemed to like opera when you listened to "The Three Tenors."**

Well, that's different from what these rock and roll - and all that.

I like certain ones [opera] not all of it, but some of it is good. and those three are about the outstanding that we listened to and I liked. [Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo and José Carreras]

**How much television do you watch?**

Mostly news, and I don't care if it's some of these half-hour situations, there's nothin' to 'em. *Are You Being Served?* I like that, they've taken that off, now. Different ones like that program, the English have a different way of expressing - it could be that some of their jokes are a little bit raw, but it don't - the way they give it it doesn't seem that way. I like *Matlock*, *Murder She Wrote*, *Jeopardy* and *Wheel of Fortune*. I wish they'd bring back *Amos and Andy*, - well, there's some that was both on t.v. and radio, one of 'em was Jack Benny, he was always good, and the barber - Perry Como. Lawrence Welk. The music, it's relaxing, and it's - nothing that's - he was straight laced, there was nothing that was offensive. I like that kind of music.

**Which comedian made you laugh the most?**

*I Love Lucy*, she was always good for a laugh. Red Skelton was good, but *I love Lucy* was the best of the bunch.

**How important is reading to you? Who are your favorite authors?**

I like to read, I don't know how important, it don't control my whole life, but I'd miss it if I couldn't read. If I like a book, I like it, I really don't know who the author is. One of my favorite authors was - took the four seasons - Edwin Way Teale, and he went to England. Zane Grey is good but they're awful flowery. Louis L'Amour was good, and Dan Parkinson. But one that I'd go back and read over and over, Edwin Way Teale. I've read that thing three or four times.

**Did you and Mom enjoy the same kinds of entertainment?**

Far as I remember. If she wanted a program, we had it, and if I wanted a program, we listened to it. It didn't make any difference to me whether I - if she liked it, fine, but she was pretty congenial that way. We never fought over who was going to listen to what.

**What about right after you were married?**

Well, we played Crockinole, we provided our own entertainment we would maybe go visiting someplace, different from what it is now. You had nothing to stay home for if you wanted to go someplace. You didn't have radio or t.v., stuff like you do now.

**What was your favorite Walt Disney movie?**

Oh, they're all about the same. Now some of his movies, I liked 'em all.



Used to be that English girl that played on a lot of the Disney movies. She played just recently, the mother and the father were separated and she had a twin sister that she didn't know until she went to camp and they got interested and found out and they switched and was trying to get the mother and father back in - Patty Duke.

Did you and Mom ever go dancing or listen to the big bands?

No.

What about your years at the lodge? How did you get into it?

That's when you were up at Humboldt. [1939-40] Friends asked me. It was the Knights of Pythias. Their goal was friendship. See, it was the only lodge that was endorsed by President Lincoln. It started during the Civil War and he was trying to get the nation back together so - I don't know how it started but he endorsed it. That's the only one, see, 'cause it was based on friendship. Damon and Pythias were two slaves or something and one of them was going to be killed, and the other one said "I'll take your place." Their friendship was so strong that Damon took the place of Pythias.<sup>2</sup>

What were your experiences in the lodge?

Just trying to teach the lessons of the lodge. You was just to propose to live by the love of Damon and Pythias. 'Course when they opened lodge they had certain things that you had to go through, naturally would, and then they were always having installation of new members, and there was never any gossiping or running people down, that was against the teachings of the lodge. Supposed to uphold the friendship of Damon and Pythias. We had entertainments, maybe we'd have somebody come in and maybe had been gone somewhere, tell us about their experiences, stuff like that. Usually every night after the lodge if there was nothing doing, we'd have a short meeting and all get out and play mostly Pedro. [A card game] I joined the year that you went north, and then, oh, I was in there several years because although you didn't have to go through the chairs - offices - see there was a vice-chancellor and the chancellor commander was the head. I was hard of hearing - my hearing wasn't good enough to conduct a meeting. After you held an office five years, you were eligible to be an officer - so I was master of exchequer, that took care of the finances. I had to be there five years before that could happen. Then one year it come to my turn and I was chancellor commander, I conducted the meetings - then along about that time we'd stay up maybe eleven or eleven-thirty before we got through and I would be too tired the next morning, so I finally decided to quit and they hated to see me quit. I told 'em the reason why, getting older and had the heart attack [this would have been during 1968], and Judge Darby, Basil Darby, he belonged, he got up, he said, "Well, we hate to lose Lowell, but I think he's doing the right thing. His job comes first. If staying out at night, the next morning, if it makes him too tired, I think he's right, his job comes first." See - I thought that was pretty good, you know, the way he got up. I went down a couple of different times, they invited me down for something that was special,

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<sup>2</sup> According to *The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia* - "Damon and Pythias were two youths whose loyalty to each other symbolizes true friendship. When Pythias, condemned to death by the Syracusan [Greek] tyrant Dionysius the Elder, was released to arrange his affairs, Damon stayed on as pledge. On Pythias' return, Dionysius freed them both."



and they didn't have any ritual work to go through because I wasn't a member - but they had a short meeting just going through the opening and closing, and I forgot what it was, anyway they invited me down two or three times just for old time's sake. I thought that was nice.

The lodge was made for a good part in our national life. What his idea was - as I said that's the only lodge that is endorsed by the federal government. It was endorsed by Lincoln. The Masonic Lodge has been going for hundreds of years and the Woodsman's lodge has been going since before the Civil War, but this was a new lodge that was put together and the object was friendship, to bring people together. That's why they took the friendship of Damon and Pythias, cause what he did, he gave his life for his friend, and that's the reason why they signed the charter for the lodge, the only one. This here was more of a fun lodge - fun part - here's the name, Nomad (Damon spelled backwards) this was the Nomad lodge.

**Are you friendly with your neighbors?**

Oh, yes, look what they're doing for us. We were real friendly with Winnie's folks. They lived right down here on the old house they took out [Iverson's] - Holmes. They was great friends with your mother and I was a great friend of Mr. Holmes. Sonny Holmes' grandparents. Sonny's mother was a daughter of them, and then Joe Holmes was one of the boys, and one of the boys lived up in - I think it was up in Surprise Valley, way up in Modoc County. And after Mrs. Holmes died, he [Mr. Holmes] used to go up there and spend the summer with them.

**What made them good neighbors?**

We just liked each other, that's all. Mr. Holmes'd come up and we'd talk out there and then Mrs. Holmes'd come up - your mother just liked 'em.

We was never too much friendly with the Alleys - nothing against them. After Mr. Alley's mother passed away, then he came up here to take care of the ranch, he was down in the South Seas, and she was very - didn't want anybody on the place at all. Kids used to go through on their motorcycles and she'd kick 'em off and she come over one day and wanted your mother to tell her who went through. And Mama says, "Well, I don't know." They had their helmets on and she says, "I don't know." And Mrs. Alley said something about - she knew, alright - and your mother said, "No, I couldn't get out and prove it was anybody." 'Course, it was Mike [Edmunson], oh, he was a dickens. Haul around there, just like a shot, and what they was afraid of was if the kids went through the place - they had a gap out there and they used to go through there and around - they might hit a tree and be hurt and then they'd get sued - she was right, alright, but Mike used to come back around through here and he'd come out through, fifty-sixty miles an hour, and I went out and told him - I stopped him - I said, "Mike," you were here a time - with the kids - "don't come through the yard, if you want to go through, don't use the front yard, you can go around the garage. Little kids are here sometimes, you might hit one and kill 'em." I said, "You'd feel bad." So he quit coming through there, he'd go around.

**What about the time you were picking berries?**

Oh, yes, I was down there and I was picking on Joe's place [Barcaglia]. Mrs. Alley came out and saw the car, she didn't know who it was, parked there, and she hollered - and I stepped out from behind the car - she said, "We don't allow people in here picking berries." When she got



through, I said, "Oh, I'm sorry - I'm Mr. McDonald." "Oh," she was the one who was sorry - she said, "I'm so sorry," she said, "you can pick any place you want." She was very emphatic, and so when Glenn died last year I went over a day or so to see her and she came out. She just hugged me and kissed me - oh, she really - good neighbor, see.

Joe [Barcaglia] was a good neighbor, went down to Joe's all the time and then as soon as Bob started building the house I used to go back and forth visiting him. We just became good neighbors. Evidently he liked me from the first, and see when they put the roof on, why, Bob's son helped him, his son and one of Heidi's boys [these are the Mitchells who live just to the west of the property] were living there and they helped put the roof on the house and then we just were good friends from the start, and of course Edmunsons, [across the road directly to the south] they was always friends of them, your mother liked Mrs. Edmunson. She [Nettie] didn't have much to do with the Wells' over here. [Across Occidental to the south, up on the hill] When they first came up here for years they had chickens, and all the phones was on a - all together - party lines. So she was on the phone with somebody and Wells tried to break in, he needed some chicken feed, he wanted to order it, and so your mother got through, she kind of suspicioned the way he talked that he'd be over, so she turned the radio on, she was workin' out in the yard when he came, and he said something about the phone - "Oh," she said, "no, go in and see, no, I'm not using the phone." So he come in the house to look.

**He actually came in to prove she hadn't been on the phone? That's pretty officious.**

He wanted the phone, yeah, but he couldn't get in, you see. She'd been - I don't know who she was talkin' with. He said, "You were on the phone." She said, "Here, I'm not on the phone, go in and see, nobody's on the phone, I'm out here watering the garden, go in and see..." Well, I know, but he was that way, years ago. He came out, "You're right, nobody on the phone." He said, "I want to get my chicken feed order in so they can haul it out."

**Tell the story about the people and the fence line. Back here to the north.**

He had theory, way up in the air. [Leroy Roberts] He wanted me to sign the place over to him. He wanted to get into the apple game. This orchard was bearing - good crop, and he - what he wanted for us to do was sign the place over to him and we could live here as long as we wanted. There was no money involved, but he said - he used to sit up with pads till eleven or twelve at night figuring out this scheme, see. And so he came over one day at noon hour, Pat and him. That's when he was dickering for a place over on Barlow Lane. (They had this little old house there and he built the new one for Pat, cost 'em thirty or thirty-five thousand.) He come over here and he said, "Well, we come over to see where I stand." I looked at him and I said, "What do you mean?" "Well," he said, "I'm dickering for this place over here on Barlow, and if I can get your place I won't buy it." I said, "Well, gee I don't..." It was so fantastic, I had never committed myself, I just let him talk, see. 'Cause I thought, you know, but he was serious. So I said, "Well, now, listen, lookie here," I said, "I can't do that," I said, "Ernie and Nancy might want the place." And I said, "They don't know what's going to happen in ten or twelve years from now." So I said, "We can't do



days I could be just fighting mad in fifteen seconds, just struck me just right. And he came there and I said to him, I said, "You jumped onto my wife the other day," and I said, "I won't stand for that," So I told him what I thought and he went home and after that - After I have words with somebody like that - I suppose I should have went and apologized, but he stuck his neck out 'cause he thought he was right but he wasn't, you see, because there's no right of way through there.

**Who accused you of moving the fence?**

Well, that was Leroy Roberts. See, there used to be a big limb come out this way and I had put a swing rope on it for those kids [Leroy's kids]. And when she come here, he told her [Marianne, who lives up the hill to the west] that that limb belongs on their property.

**My daughters used to play on that swing.**

She [Marianne] thought that Mr. Roberts, he was pretty smart, he knew what was going on, "You can't fool Mr. Roberts, he's pretty sharp."

**But somebody accused you of moving the fence, and it was grown right into the trees you planted at least fifty years ago.**

Oh, yes, I was supposed to have moved the fence, and put those trees on my property.

**Have you ever had surgery?**

Well, yes, my knee, [hip] not before that, not way back.

**Tell us about what happened to you earlier this year. (1995)**

Well, I used to walk in my sleep, and I did this a couple of times and I woke up a couple of times and I was on the floor in the bathroom and I managed to get back in bed, and then about the third time it happened I couldn't get off the floor. I drug myself back into the bedroom by my elbows, see my hip was broke. So you [Nancy] called up the 911 and they came out and took me to the hospital. Well they found my hip was broke so Dr. Campbell put a new hip in. and I forgot how many weeks I was with the hip [four weeks] Then I was able to come home again, and my prostate, it was acting up, so I had to go back to the hospital and they worked on my prostate, [he had surgery for enlarged prostate on February 21] and it got so it worked alright, and I came home again and I'd been home two or three weeks and in the morning, we'd went to Santa Rosa and bought my shoes - anyway, I'd got so I could walk pretty good with the walker, so then I went out on the back porch and I got disoriented and fell down and broke my leg.<sup>3</sup> [March 18]

**What magazines do you subscribe to?**

*Geographic*, we've been taking those for fifty years. The *Arizona Highways*, and then the new one that we take is the *Country. Modern Maturity*, that's put out by the old people. They just send that. That's paid for by when you join AARP. Five dollars you pay to join.

**Has retirement been a positive or negative experience?**

Positive! The last twenty years since I retired, before your mother passed away a couple of years ago, were the happiest years of my life. We did as we pleased, didn't have get up at 8:0'clock and go to work every morning.

**Did you work become a grind, then?**

It was at first, and then before I retired I wouldn't have traded my job for any job in the country. When I got in the rhythm and through

<sup>3</sup> He was in the hospital another month after this, and finally came home on April 22, 1995. He had broken his hip on January 11.



experience, and if anybody wanted to know anything about the shop they'd always send 'em to me. Well, you see, not because it was me, but because I'd had that thirty or forty years experience and I was the only one that knew it. When I retired I just changed jobs. I've said, and people that have retired have said the same thing, I don't have as much leisure time now as I did when I worked. 'Cause you always had something you wanted to do, like in the garden, that's a year 'round job. Now you take if I wasn't bunged up like this, I'd be getting horse manure put on the job for next year and then along about in the fall, I would plant one patch of potatoes, early potatoes, see, if I'd a done that last year, we'd a been usin' new potatoes. So it's year round, and when I got through, there was the pruning to do, and brush to cut and people say, come here and say, "I don't see how you get all this work done." I say, "Well, now, wait a minute, this don't come all at once, it's seasonal work, I'm busy all the time, but doesn't everything come at once. They don't realize that unless they live in the country.

**Did you make any close friends after you retired?**

Oh, yes, we made a lot of good friends up in Lake County but then they're all gone. They would come down and see us down here, and there was the Wards, Florence Ward. The other day we got a card from the Pooles, Cliff and Vena Poole. We'd always go up there and have dinner with them, took apples up every year for the whole bunch, six or seven boxes, and then there was Florence's sister, Elaine, well, she died three or four years ago. Florence's daughter, her husband was a school teacher in Middletown and they lived in a suburb out from Lower Lake, and Elaine died with cancer, and she stayed there with Florence's daughter 'till she died. Then there was another woman there, we made a lot of good friends up there.

**Tell us about some of the trips you took, the people you met.**

One of the good, extra, was the year we went over to Malheur Lake and Ernie was having a workshop over there when President Kennedy started the work corps - Job Corps, and they was - they had two hundred fellows working on the wildlife thing over there. See, that was Malheur Lake with all the water from both sides of the mountain drained in and there was no outlet, and so they had two hundred young fellows, and they were cleaning it up, making dikes and levies, things like that - then 'course when Kennedy was shot, that thing stopped, there was no more money appropriated for it. So this regular little town that they had made, and it was vacant and so when Ernie had a workshop over in that section of Oregon he held it at this Job Corps center and then the - that's all sparsley settled and he sent letters to the teachers in about a two hundred mile radius and they all came to the job center so he could teach 'em how to present this conservation program. When he took the job - an old fellow had had it for years - Conservation and Education - so they wanted Ernie to take it after he went back to Purdue and he was at the Gorge at that time - no he'd moved into Northeast Portland - and they sent him back to Purdue for a year to get his master's and then he told 'em he would take it - it was an advancement - he would take it, but he had to present his own program. This other fellow was old, in the sixties, and Ernie had new ideas - so they said okay, so he did a lot of paperwork and he set up his own program, what to teach and this and that, then when he held these workshops, they would have certain places they would hold for workshop centers, all the teachers would come and he would show them how to present the program. He did that for several



years. So this was this old Job Corps center, it was vacant. Oh, it was beautiful, had a big walk-in refrigerator, stainless steel, you know how the government - it cost them two million to build this little town and they put in two hundred young men there. It cost them ten thousand dollars for every man they had. Then when Kennedy was shot it was all through, the money was gone, and that was it. All over the country it was the same way.

**What was good about the experience?**

Well it was just - Ernie and Char was there and it was just something different. We would go down in the morning and before dark. What they did - this lake, it covered about - varied from twenty-five to fifty-thousand acres, when it spread out - just real shallow - and they had a place out there that they baited with corn so the ducks would get used to coming out and then they had a net they would shoot over the top. Well, this one morning they were going to shoot, before daylight they took us down in the pickup, and we set in this little house that had just a little slit - we could sit there and look out, a blind was what it was. When it commenced to getting daylight you could see the ducks coming out of the tules to feed on that corn, see. And then they had a battery that when they shot the net they put the plunger on the battery - and there was hardly any ducks came out that morning and the fellow - he kept waiting for more ducks and they just didn't come out, so his boss came down about daylight and he said, "What happened to the gun? I didn't hear it go off." And the kid told him. "Well," he said, "you had people here to watch you, you should have shot it anyway."

**What was the net for?**

To catch the ducks so if they want to see if there was any disease, if they wanted to tag 'em, you see. 'Course they scared the ducks but they were caught. So we stayed there several days and that was the high point of that trip. I think it cost us down at the place where we parked the trailer - electricity cost us fifty cents a day. Now after that they quit it, a year or so after that, Ernie said you can't stay in there.

**Have you been out of the country?**

Went up to Victoria.

**What did you do there?**

We didn't do anything, it was before we got the trailer. And we met the Gallaghers up there, and they were the ones that talked us into it. They came up before vacation and they said, "What are you going to do on your vacation?" That was a couple of weeks away. We said, "Well, we don't know yet, we hadn't thought, going up to Oregon or somewhere." So they said, "Well, you come and we'll meet you at Victoria and we'll see it together." We thought, gee, that's fine. So we did that and that was just a year or so after their boy had been killed going to Reno and Blanche was still - hadn't gotten over it. So we got up there just one day late from what we thought we would be - we stopped overnight at - she married Bob Gosney - she was the godparents of all your kids - [except Jo-Anna] Jeannie Stilson. So we stopped there and Mrs. Stilson - she's very nice, motherly person - she said, "Well my husband is on mail route, star route up to the peninsula. You've got to stay overnight and meet him." So we did that, so that put us a day late into Victoria. But they were waiting for us down at the inland harbor.

**How did you get to Victoria?**

Well, across from Astoria by the ferry. Before they put the bridge in.



And so they had rented a room for us in the Cragmont Motel, and they said, "We got here yesterday and we've been here before. Blanche wants to go to Salt Lake City," said, "Come along with us," So we said, "No, we're in a foreign country, you know it's the first time we've been out of the country, so we'll stay here, and then the next day we headed for Gosney's.

**What did you do in Victoria?**

Went to see the Butchart's Gardens, and took around the town. It was a leisurely town, and if you wanted to go anyplace they had these two or four horse wagons - you can go anywhere you want - we had a good time, and then the next morning we went up about twenty miles up to the town of Sydney. That's where the ferries went across to Anacortes, and so then we went to Anacortes, and down and we stopped overnight just between Seattle and - I forgot the next town - Tacoma. We stayed at the Poodle Dog. See, in Victoria they'd had a Poodle Dog Cafe. Got down there and we saw this sign, Poodle Dog, and your mother said, "Oh, let's stop - stay there - Poodle Dog!" So we stayed there overnight and the next day we went over to Puyallup and on the north side of Mt. Ranier, went up there and ate lunch at the Sunrise Court, or hotel, and the next day we went on over to Gosney's. He was working at that time on the soil conservation. That's how he was transferred from here up to there, you see. He had time coming, so two afternoons he took us, one day up to the big dam on the Columbia, then the next day we just went around town.

In where Ellensburg was was in the valley and this water that they irrigate with comes from way up in the Cascades, and they had different elevations for different canals, lower canal come down here and the upper canal come up on this one, and then the other one come up a little higher so that it was all gravity water for irrigation, and so we went, looked all around through there, and before we got the trailer, that was the best trip, then after we got the trailer was the Malheur. So we went back the second time to see the Gosneys. The first time they didn't know we were coming so we tried to find the street or the place and we couldn't. We got back in town and saw a motorcycle cop, so we flagged him and asked him if he could tell us where the Gosneys lived and he said, "Wait a minute, I'll find out." So he telephoned in to the headquarters and in a few minutes he had the address.

In 1968, when you stopped on the way home from Alaska - we had been looking at trailers and we ordered this one and the fellow was putting it in shape, so Jack went over with me to bring it home. The springs on the pickup - no it was the Dodge Monaco - we brought it home and it sagged way down so I ordered the auxiliary springs to put on the Monaco then we took it over and the fellow hooked it up.

**What about the time the work shop almost burned down?**

Well, that's only been four or five years ago. Yeah, we had the shake roof on the shop, no it was paper. And we went over, Ernie and I went over to Bob's to borrow something, Ernie was staying here, I think he was getting his pickup fixed up so he could pull the trailer - I gave him the [orchard] trailer. We went over to Bob's and he [Ernie] came back to get something out of the shop and it was all full of smoke. And he hollered, "The shop's on fire!" Well, course I grabbed the pickup to drive it back and the first thing Bob did was grab for some water hose and nozzle. And he came right through the orchard. And it was just, the



shop, you couldn't see, it was dark, there was nothing but smoke, and so they got the fire out, and it was mostly smoke, it hadn't got to the fire stage, so they got the fire out and got all the smoke cleared out and it was all charred on the north side, and down halfway on the south side. So the first thing we did was call up the fire adjuster, we called up the company in Santa Rosa and told 'em - they said, "Well," they give us the number, "You call up Petaluma and get the fire adjuster and he'll come out." So we did that, and in a day or two he came out he said, "Well, I've got a couple of carpenters that work for us on jobs like that. I'll call 'em up and one of 'em'll come and see you." So he did and in a day or two this fellow came and he lived up on Maacama Creek, you know where the old school is? He lived right across the road. So he come down and appraised it, and what damage was done and he sent that in to this fellow in Petaluma. He was a nice fellow, and it was about twenty-five hundred. So he got the job and the insurance company was going to pay for it in three installments. This carpenter, he got a third when he started the job and he got another third when he was about half way through, and when he was finished he got the other third. That's the way it worked out. And he came down, he had a fellow helping, and they did a good job and everything. So that was the history of the fire.

**What's famous about Sebastopol?**

Gravenstein apples, that's what put us on the map. That was in the past.

**What is it that attracts people here now?**

Well, it has to be the location. What else? The country around. They like it. You can't find a prettier situation, location, and it hasn't changed.

**Where were you when Neil Armstrong walked on the Moon?**

Out in the yard, lookin' up at the Moon.

**When Kennedy was assassinated?**

I was working. The boss came back and said, "Well, President Kennedy's been assassinated, and we all went home.

**What did you think of Operation Desert Storm?**

I thought he ought to be stopped [Saddam Hussein]. This day and age you can't let a person like him go in and take over another country like he did. But you got the same thing in Europe, and everybody's afraid to do something [Bosnia]. That's where the second world war started, [actually, the first world war, when the Grand Duke Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo], and they're afraid if you go in there you're going to have the third world war, that's why nobody will go in.

**Who did you vote for when you first voted for president - that would have been 1924.**

We'll have to go look and see who ran, and it would have been a Republican. [Calvin Coolidge]

**Do you feel differently about politicians and politics now than you did then?**

You didn't know as much about 'em as you do now. I'm older now, you look at things differently. They're all politicians and they'll do - we think something is crooked, to them it's not - votes - everything's for votes.

**Have you ever seen a president in person?**

Yes, the one who quit - Nixon - in Salem, Oregon, not right close, but we was on our vacation, and at that time I dreaded to drive through a big town, so we cut south to get over to where we were going - I think Dabney - and we went through Salem, right by the courthouse, and Nixon



and Eisenhower were holding a meeting on the steps of the courthouse, and I think that's when Eisenhower said, "That's my man."

**What was America's lowest moment?**

The Civil War. I don't remember anything in my lifetime to equal that - the whole country fighting each other.

**America's best time?**

I remember, what I heard, the best period - most prosperous - was right after the first world war, until '29 - everybody was working, although you had the flapper age, but the whole country was going through a hysteria. "This will never end, this will keep going on." They were letting loose steam, the whole country.

**Is there a time or place in history in which you think it would have been fascinating to live?**

Not that I know of - 'course I guess the most would be the settling of the west. Everything was progressing, the railroads came across the continent - the telegraph came across the continent, things were going ahead, like they had never done before in the history of the world. 1860's & '70's.

**What direction do you think the country is going in today, and are you optimistic or pessimistic?**

Well, I think right now it's more optimistic, because they're getting rid of some of your crookedness and overspending in Washington. You see, if it goes on it can't do anything but do good. The country's been going the wrong direction for forty years, but I think now it's going in the right direction. Now what happens, who knows?

**What was it like keeping up with world events before television?**

Kind of dull. Turn the radio on, read the newspaper, but you didn't take the interest in daily events you do now. Times were different then, it seems closer together now. Something happened in Europe today, it might be a month before you heard about it; now you look on t.v. and you see it!

**Does being an American feel different today than it did forty or fifty years ago?**

Oh yes, can't help it. Times have progressed, roads are better, communication.

**How do you respond to the changes taking place?**

I didn't respond at all, just went on from day to day.

**You just accepted everything?**

Well, yes.

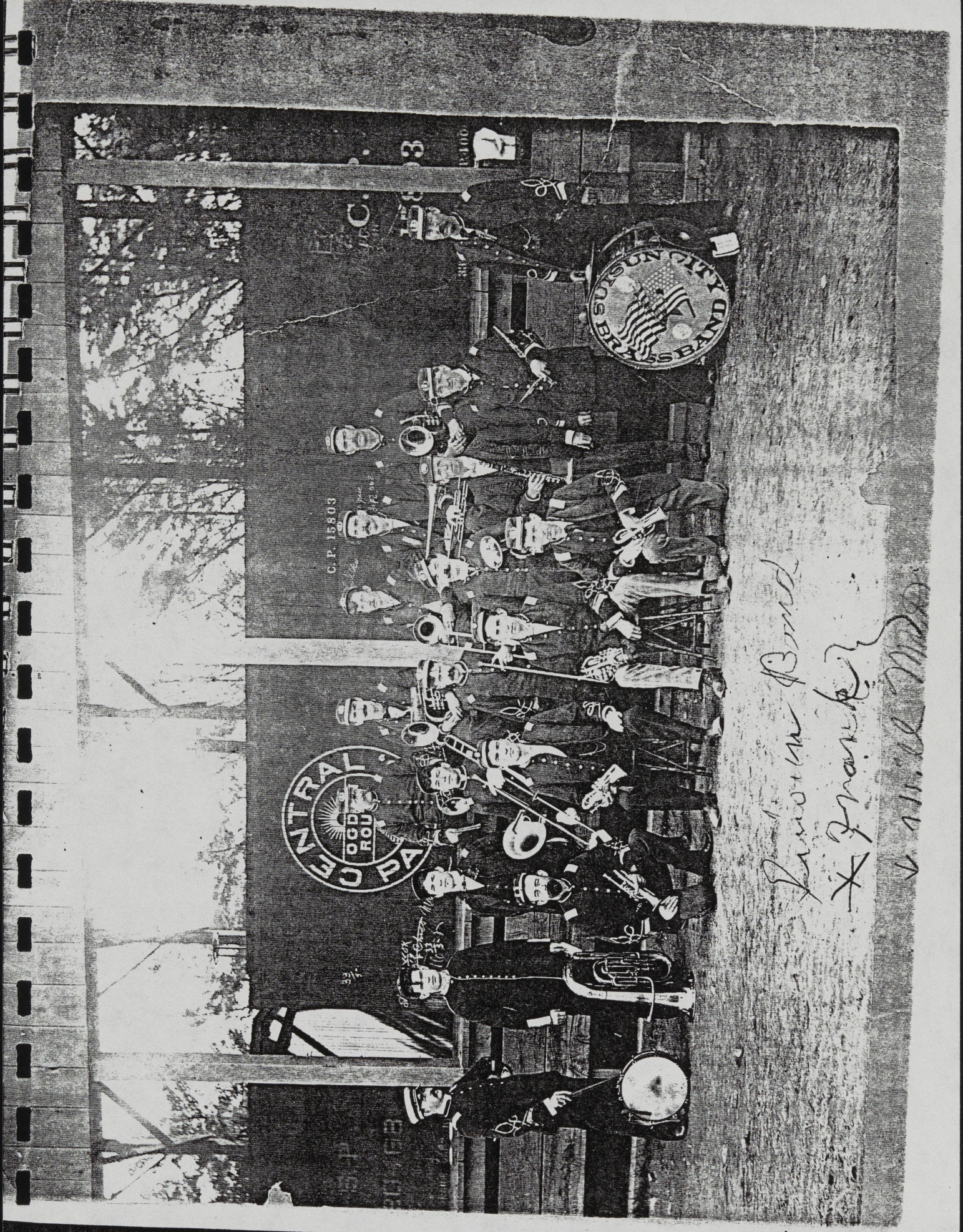
**What would you like to tell those who read this history?**

Don't just accept things like I did. If there are things you don't think is right, try and change 'em, whether they're personal or out in the world. I wish I had questioned things more instead of just accepting them. I would have finished high school and probably had a different kind of life.

I remember, when I got through grammar school, I was wondering how it would have been if I had gone to Davis Agricultural school. Back then I thought about being a veterinarian, or learning better ways to farm and ranch.

That's about all I have to say about that.





Tuscon Band  
X Frank  
11.11.11





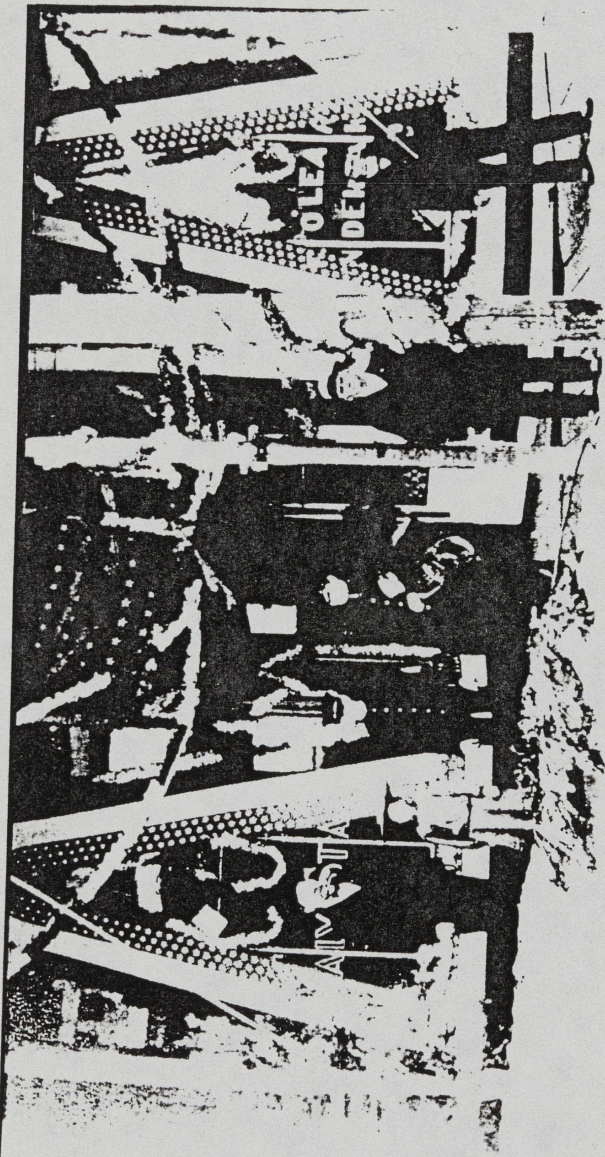
Maude & Kate Hinch  
Frank McDonald  
+ Maude Hinch McD.





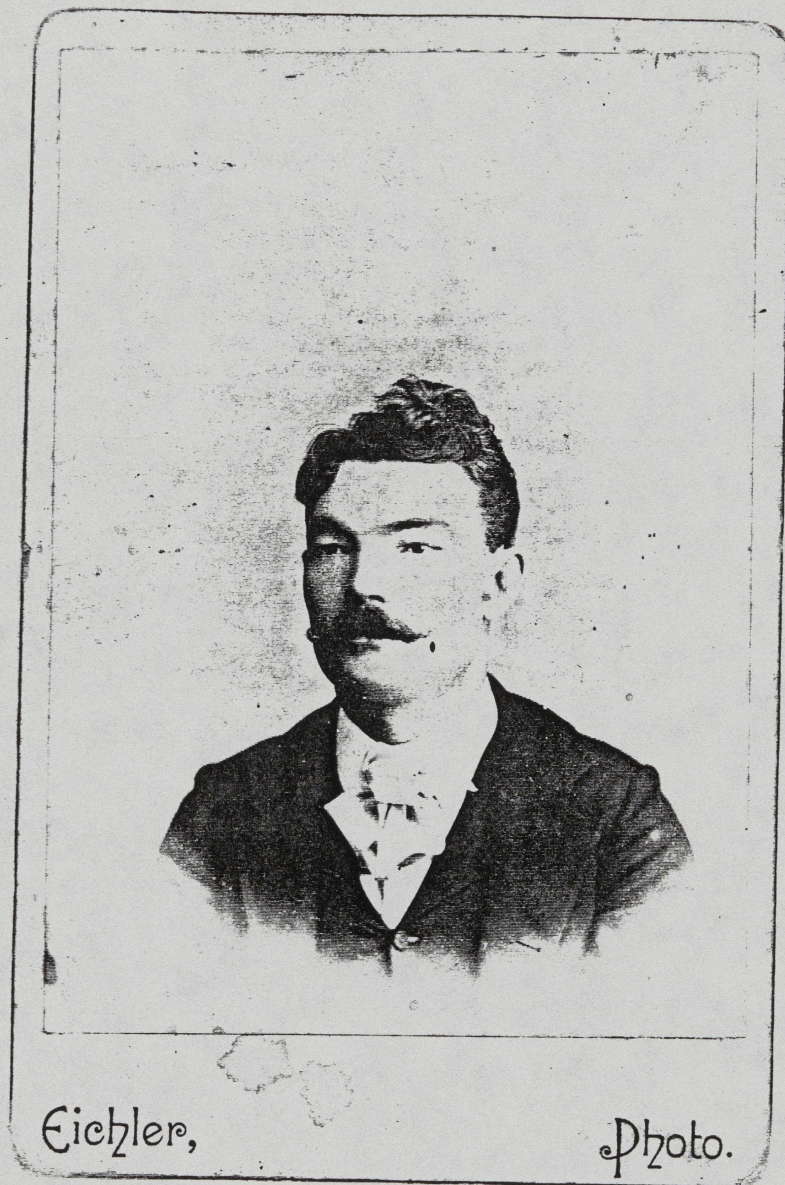
Lowell McDonald was  
born in one of these houses  
on Burnett St, Sebastopol,  
on August 29, 1903





? Frank Ed ?  
 Lizzie Mel. McDonald O'Leary ?  
 Fourth of July - (wearing green)  
 Finally Standard Newspaper  
 Bodega Ave West  
 Catty Corner from library  
 before 1906





Uncle Will McDonald  
(no date)





(Remodeled) House on  
Pleasant Hill Rd.

Photo - June - 1995



Grandma Hersch

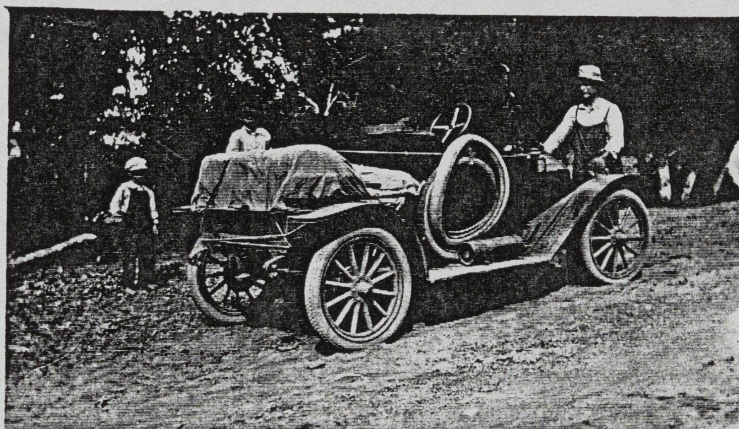
Mary Margaret  
Kepner Hersch



CHARLES FRANK ERN



LOWELL RUTH 1917



CHARLES LOWELL

1917



Lowell



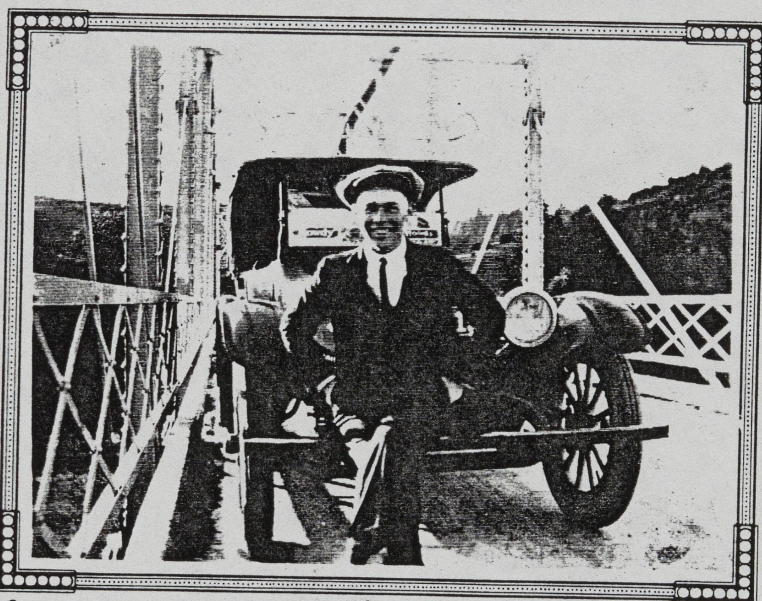






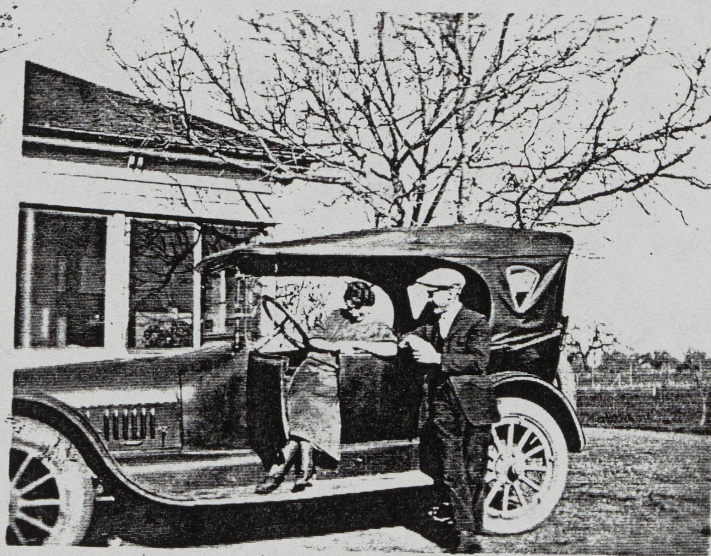
Nettie

1924



Lowell

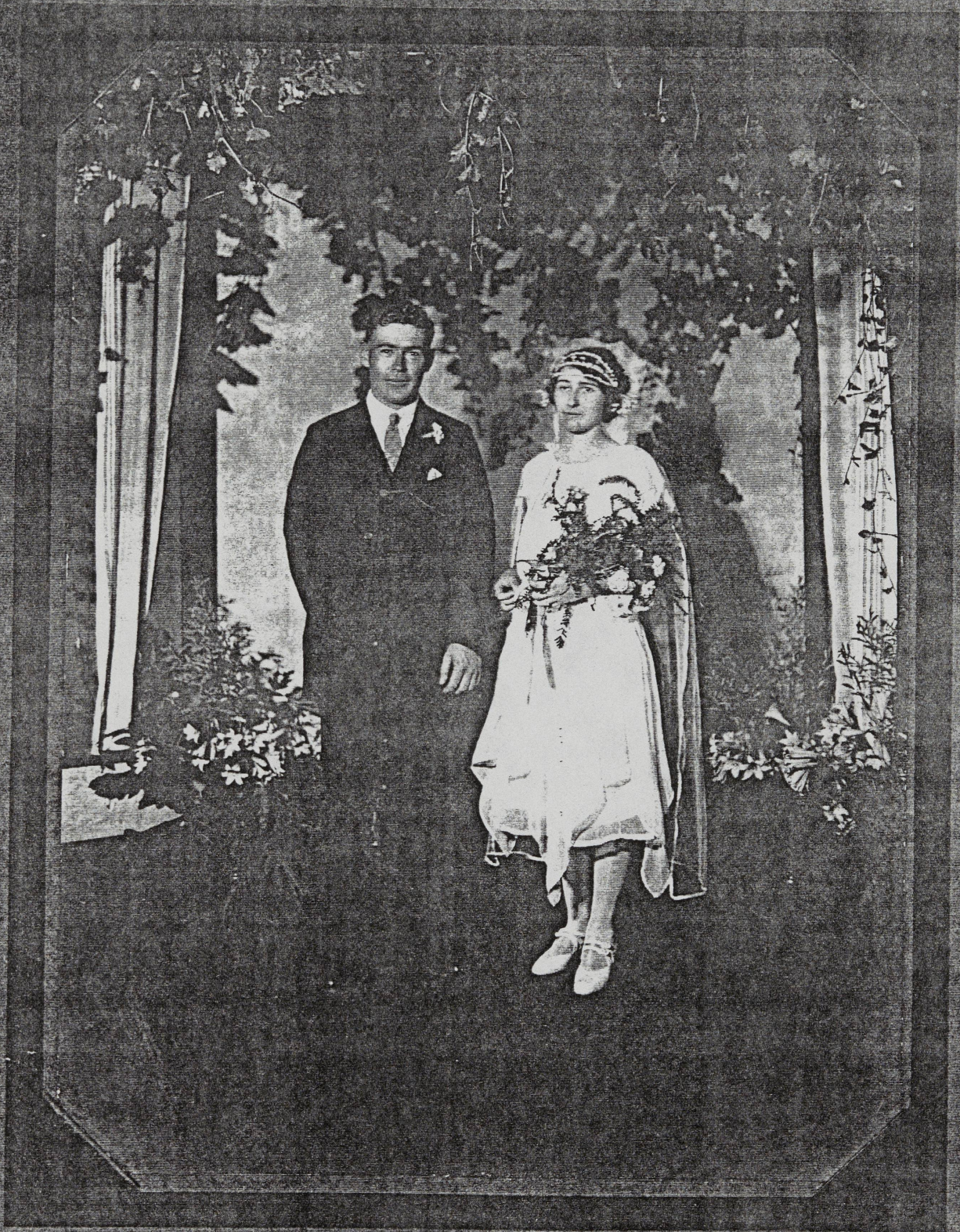
October 1924



Nettie + Lowell 1925?

Nettie + Lowell  
before marriage.





*Nelson*  
SANTA ROSA, CAL.





Bride & Groom

Aug. 4, 1924

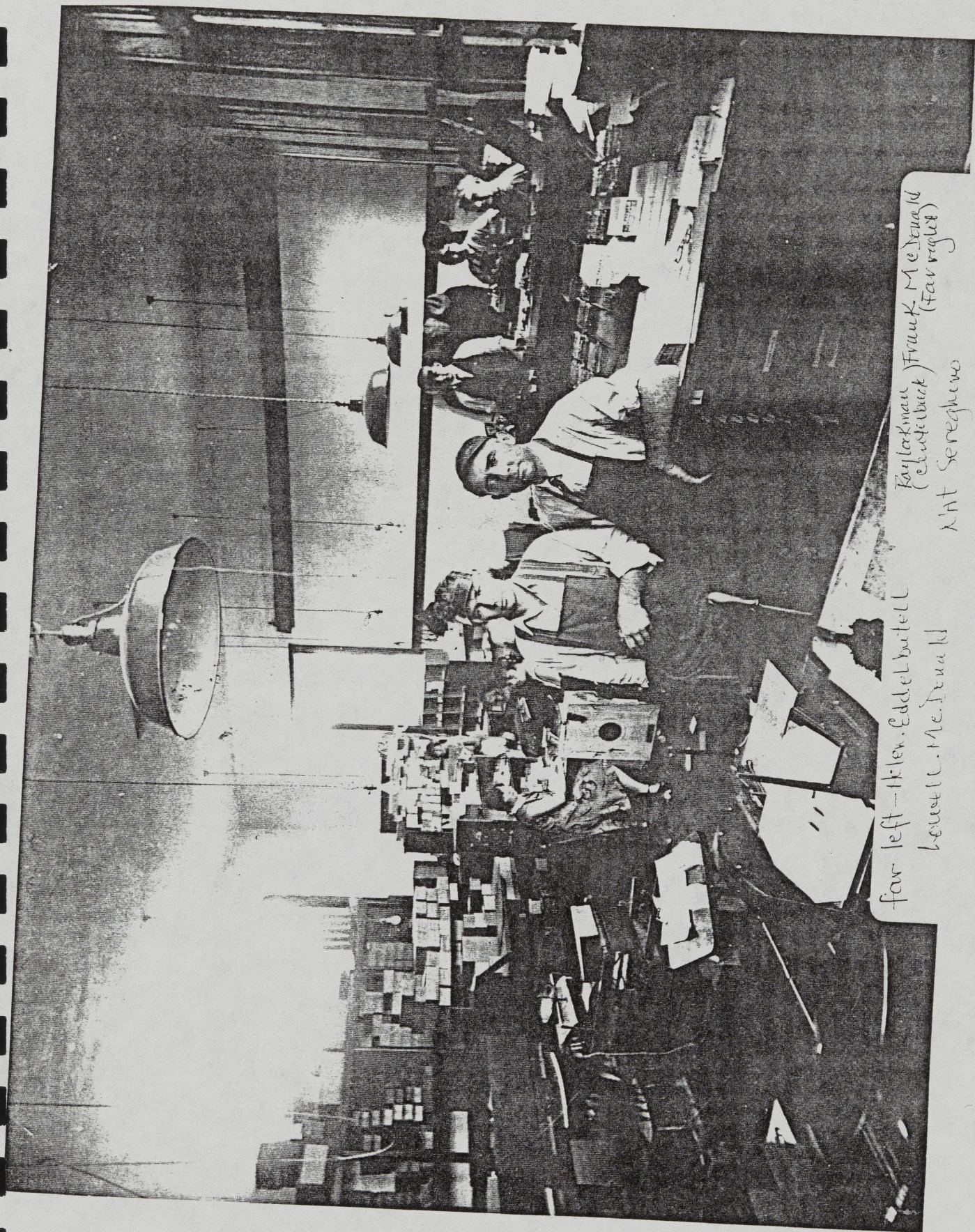
Nellie & Lowell  
Wedding picture  
Aug 4, 1924

Wedding Party - Frank & Maud McDonald



Wedding Party -  
Clarence & May Head  
Frank & Maud McDonald





far left - Iker, Eddelbutell

Lowell McDevauld

Faylarkman Frank McDevauld

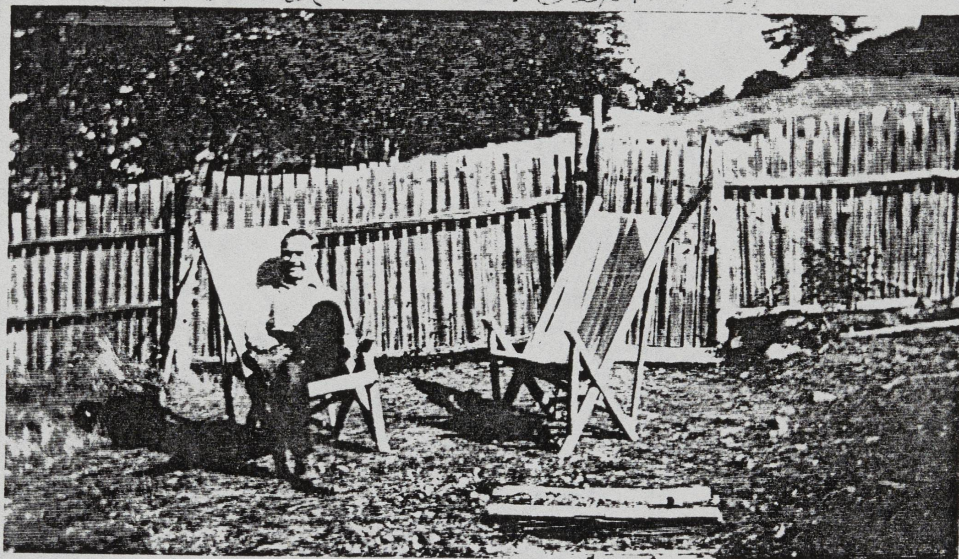
(Eddelbutell) (Far right)

Ant Sereghino





McDonald Homestead. Sept. 1927



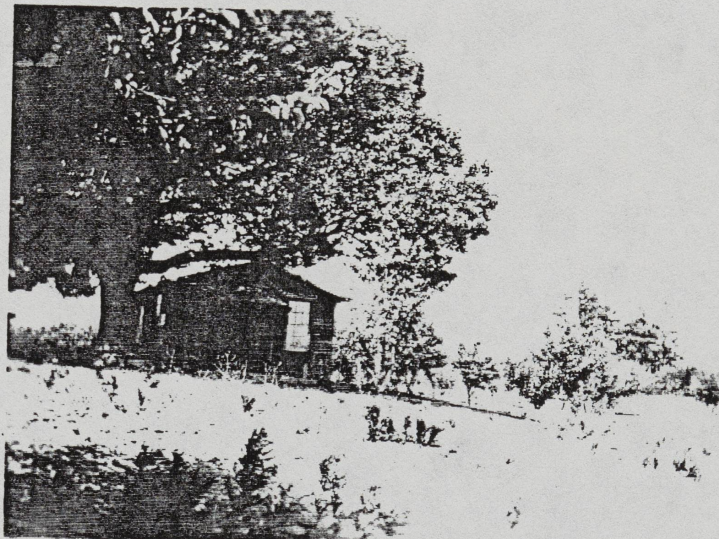
Frank + Maude at Humboldt Ranch



Frank + Maude at Humboldt Ranch

Frank + Maude at  
Humboldt Ranch

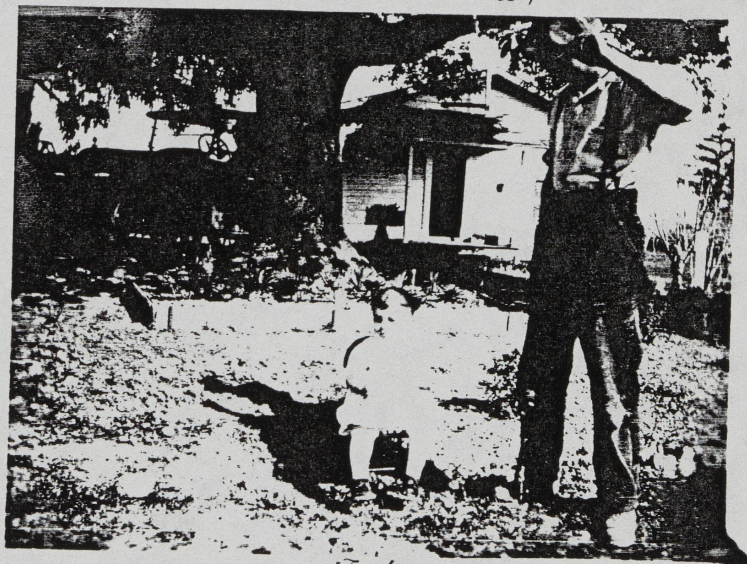




Spring 1927 Madrona Ranch



March 1929



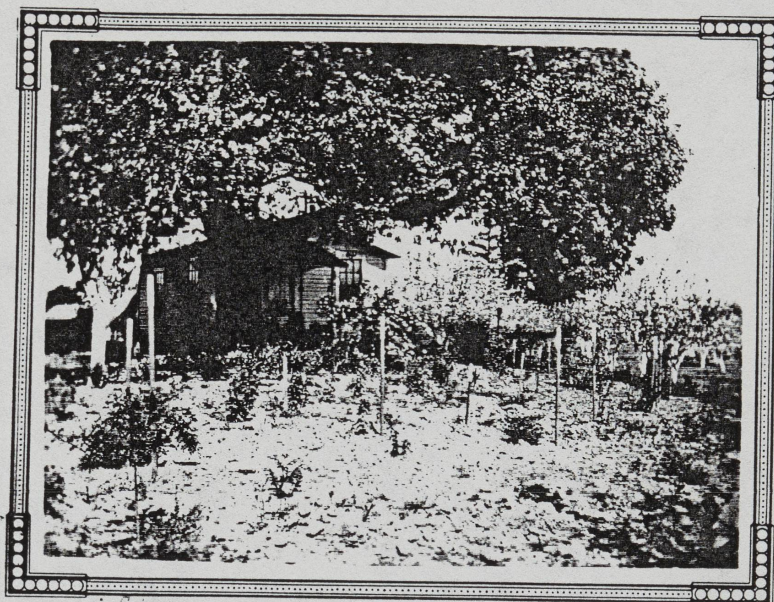
February 1929

"Madrona Ranch" - 1927

Nettie + Ernie 1929

Lowell + Ernie 1929





April 1931



The House - 1931  
Ernie on Old Bill - 1931





Feb. 1936



Grandma's house 1265 Morgan St. S.R.

May Head + Nancy - 1936  
 on Accidental Rd  
 May's House. on Morgan St.  
 Santa Rosa





7700 '36



*Lowell McDonald*

Ernie - 1936

Lowell - no date



Family Picnic



Decorated Day - 1940

Nancy

Bill Haveres  
Walt - Jerry - Leroy - ~~Carl~~ Harold  
Lowell  
Nell  
(with Betty)

Bill Thelma Evelyn Nettie

Lloyd - Jean - Joy - Muzel Haveres  
Ernie  
Gram (Maude) (Below Nell)

Valora - Nancy - Doris  
Decoration Day - 1940





The Ranch -  
Early 1940's -



Nancy - Cubby - Kitten  
1942





*Tallman*  
SANTA ROSA





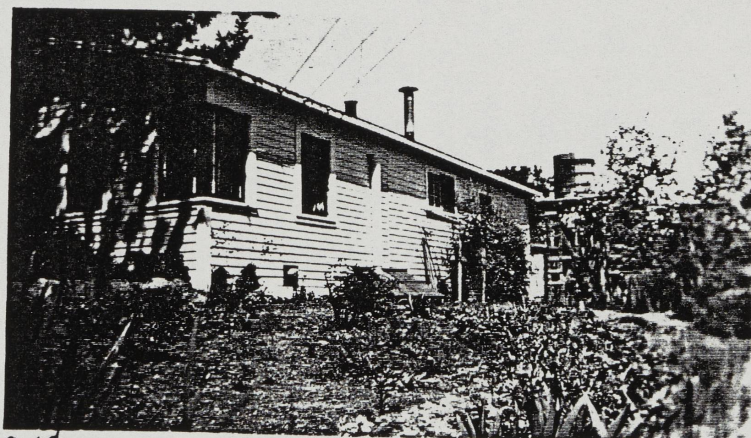
Dec. '46

Ernie -	1946
Jim Peak -	1946
Max Futtel & Nettie	1946





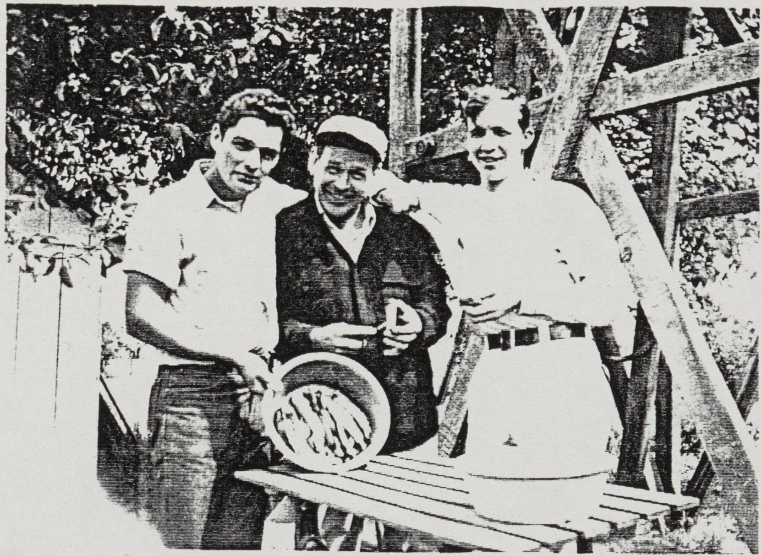
1946



1948

Lowell - 1946  
 Nettie - Lowell - Maude 1947  
 The House 1948

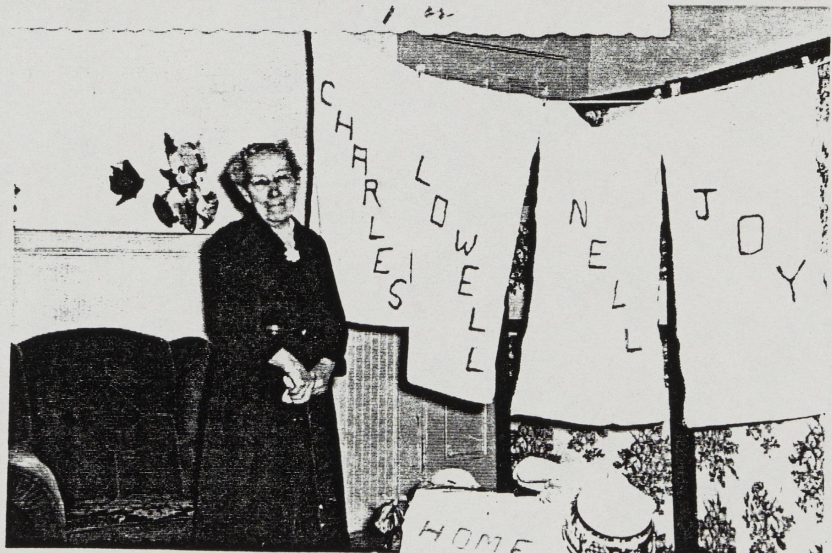




May 1 - 49



1 22



Ernie - Lowell - Bob Woltz - 1949  
 Lowell - 1951  
 Maude 1956





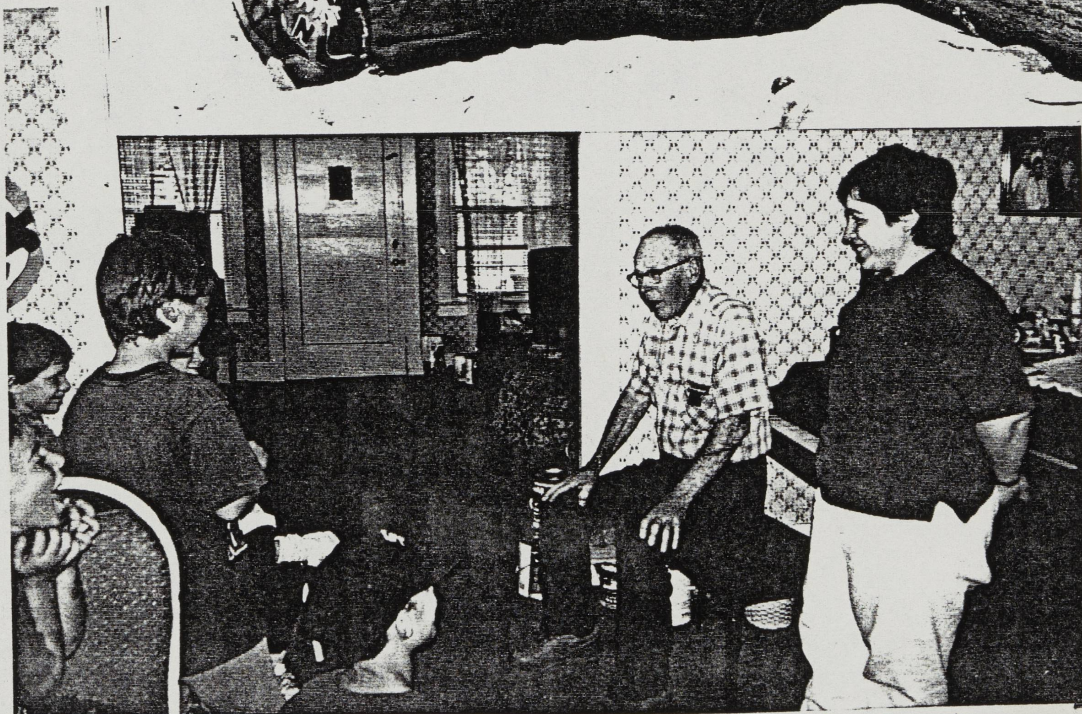
Lowell @ Clearlake

1969



with Dolores  
JOANNA  
+ Dyna  
in Alaska - 1967





Lowell with Charlene  
+ Ernie in Cape Meares - 1991

Singing "The Pig Song"  
in The Haller - 1991